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OLIVER TWIST



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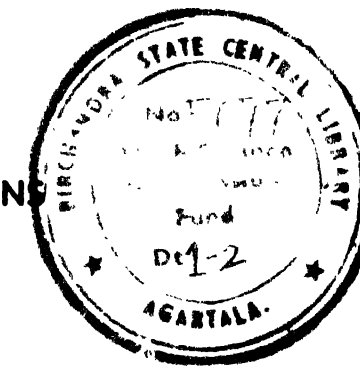

SONS

OLIVER TWIST

INFINITY'S ILLUSTRATED CLASSICS

OLIVER TWIST

CHARLES DICKENS



Retold by
W Sequeira , A D' Souza & E A Michigan
and re-illustrated

INFINITY
BOOKS

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A LONELY CHILDHOOD

Long time ago, in a workhouse of a certain town of England, a woman gave birth to a child. Inspite of the presence of the parish doctor and the nurse, efforts to save the life of this young and beautiful woman failed and she could not live for long. Only one thing was known about this woman. She was found lying in the street, a day before and someone had brought her there. No

wedding ring was found on her besides, her worn out shoes spoke of her having walked several miles, before falling in the street. Nothing else was known about her.

On the other hand, the newborn was silent for sometime, seeming to have no life in him, but later on, he cried out. Finally, the doctor left and it was decided to keep the baby in the workhouse and the name, Oliver Twist was given to him.

The next eight to ten months brought nothing but treachery and deception to Oliver. He was looked after by the workers whenever hunger made him cry out. Months later the workhouse authorities informed the parish authorities, who agreed to 'farm' Oliver. This meant Oliver had to be shifted to another workhouse, which contained some law-breaking children, but, without the convenience of too much food or clothing.



The newborn.

An elderly female, Mrs. Mann, ran this workhouse, taking seven pence-half penny per week for one child, but, quite visibly, she spent most of the money on herself.

On Oliver's ninth birthday, when he still looked pale and miserable, an inspection took place. The parish official, Mr. Bumble, a large, bad-tempered man also came over to talk about Oliver Twist. He said to Mrs. Mann, "He is now nine years old. Though a large award was offered by the parish, no information could be obtained about Oliver's parents or any of his relatives."

Mrs. Mann asked, "What about his name-Oliver Twist?"

"I myself gave him that name," Mr. Bumble replied. "All new orphans are named in alphabetical order and when his name

was to be given, the letter 'T' made me call him 'Twist."

"Why did you wish to talk about Oliver today?" Mrs. Mann asked.

Mr. Bumble answered, "He will have to return to the workhouse where he was born. He is too old to stay here now."

Mrs. Mann called Oliver and gave him a slice of bread; and he left with Mr. Bumble. In a short time, they reached the other workhouse and there, Oliver was standing in front of a large committee of stern-faced men.

"Name, boy! What is your name?" the chairman cried out at Oliver.

"Oliver, sir, Oliver Twist."

"You are an orphan, boy, do you know this?"



"What's an orphan Sir?"

"What's an orphan Sir?"

"An orphan has no mother or father. The money of the parish has been spent to bring you up."

Hearing this, Oliver started crying.

"Stop that! At once!" the chairman shouted, "instead of crying, you should thank us, we spent money to take care of you!"

That night, even on his cold, hard bed, Oliver kept on crying, till he fell asleep. The next morning, he met the other children there, but the food of the workhouse was terrible, and he never found it to be enough for any child. Only a watery soup was given three times a day, with a piece of bread on Sundays. This led to starvation among the children and they decided to do something about this. Oliver Twist was chosen to ask for

a second helping. On emptying his bowl, Oliver rose up and took it to the man serving, Mr. Limbkins. Giving him his empty bowl, Oliver said,

"Please, sir, I would like to have some more."

Highly amazed at this, the man turned to Oliver and shouted,

"What did you say?"

Oliver said, "Please, sir, may I have some more supper?"

When Mr. Bumble came to know of this, he locked up Oliver in a room. The next day, a notice was seen on the workhouse door, which said that five pounds be given to anyone who took Oliver away from the workhouse and taught him a trade.

OLIVER LEARNS A TRADE

Oliver remained locked up for more than a week. Everyday, Mr. Bumble came over and thrashed him with his cane.

One day, a chimney-sweeper, was passing through the workhouse, thinking about his problem of paying his rent and arrears to his landlord, who had pressed upon him a fine of five pounds for this. Seeing the notice, the chimney-sweeper, decided to take Oliver with

him, as well as the five pounds. He went inside, introduced himself and told about his proposal for coming there to the Committee. Mr. Limbkins said that the work of a chimney-sweeper was very suffocating for boys. Some discussion rose upon this and finally, it was decided that instead of the offered five pounds, Mr. Gamfield would get three pounds and was also told of Oliver being used to taking less food and if he ever asked for more, he was to be beaten up.

Oliver, along with the papers needed to hand him over to Mr. Gamfield, were taken out and Mr. Bumble politely told Oliver that he was going to become an apprentice.

"What's an apprentice, sir?" Oliver asked.

Mr. Bumble replied, "Mr. Gamfield will teach you his way of work and trade. He will make a man of you."

Oliver got so afraid on hearing this, that he began to cry. But Mr. Bumble asked him to wipe out his tears and the two, along with Mr. Gamfield, went to the magistrate. On their way, Mr. Bumble instructed Oliver to look very happy in the court, and if asked, say that he would be willing to work as an apprentice under Mr. Gamfield. He also added that if Oliver failed to do any of these things, there was no saying what would be done to him.

In the court, Mr. Mumble talked very politely and lovingly to Oliver, but, Oliver's face, wet with his tears, could not be hidden, and the magistrate asked, "My boy, what is the matter?"

Oliver begged and pleaded before the magistrate, not to send him with Mr. Gamfield. The magistrate felt sorry for Oliver and ordered Mr. Bumble to take him back to the



Oliver begged and pleaded.

workhouse and treat him more kindly. This brought Oliver back to the workhouse, but, the very next day, the same notice, of giving five pounds, to the person who took Oliver away was hung.

As a custom in great families, if any growing up man was unworthy in all respects, he was sent to sea. The board decided to do the same with Oliver and also conspired that they would have him killed by the captain.

As the Board was considering these options for Oliver, Mr. Sowerberry, a parish undertaker, saw the notice and thought, "This boy could help me in my business of burying the dead."

Thinking so, he talked about this in the workhouse and it was decided that Oliver was to be handed over to him, with five pounds.

Oliver was asked to shift and as Mr. Bumble took him to the undertaker's house, Oliver walked along, crying. Mr. Bumble shouted at him and said,

"What is the matter with you? You should feel happy that someone is giving you a place to live in."

"Please, sir, I'm sorry," Oliver replied, crying. "I'm very unhappy. I'm so lonely and I have no friends."

When they reached the undertaker's house, Mrs. Sowerberry, a short, fat and wrinkle faced woman, opened the door. She looked at Oliver and said,

"He is very small and looks like a bag of bones."

Wondering at this, she took Oliver to a cold, dark kitchen and told her maid, Charlotte, to

give him some cold meat which she had left for the dog.

Not bothering about anything, hungry as he was, Oliver quickly ate up the whole meat, after which, Mrs. Sowerberry took him to the room where the coffins were kept. Pointing towards a hard mattress among them, she told Oliver, "That this is your bed," and then she went away.

Oliver saw this room to be worse than the one he had in the workhouse. Apart from the empty coffins and wooden planks around him, the room was very dark and stuffy. Feeling helpless, he lay on the mattress, and crying over the situation, he went off to sleep.

Early next morning, a kick at the door woke up Oliver. He jumped up and called out, "Do you want a coffin, sir?"

The door opened and a young man came in. Walking up to Oliver, he said, "Be quiet, my boy! My name is Noah Claypole and you will work on my orders."

Later on, it was known that Noah Claypole was a charity boy, because his mother and father did not have enough money to take proper and full care of him.

Mr. Sowerberry started teaching Oliver the ways and means of his business as an undertaker. One morning, Mr. Sowerberry, along with Oliver and Noah, went to a house where a woman had just died. A coffin was taken along for her and they carried the body in it, to the churchyard and buried it. This being done, Mr. Sowerberry asked Oliver if he would like to be an undertaker.

"No, never!" Oliver said.

"Well, you'll just have to get used to it, then," Mr. Sowerberry said.

Back at home, Mrs. Sowerberry and Charlotte were never kind to Oliver, and he remained unhappy. But, Noah, treated him worst of all, and a day came when Noah said very bad things about Oliver's mother. Oliver, though small and weak, was so upset and angry that he grabbed Noah by the throat, threw him to the ground and began punching him with all his might. Noah cried out,

"Help! Oliver is going to kill me! Help! somebody help! Mrs. Sowerberry! Charlotte! Help! Oliver's gone mad! Help!"

The two women rushed up, some how managed to drag Oliver away and locked him up in a cold dark cellar. Mrs. Sowerberry said,



The two women rushed up.

"Noah, run and tell Mr. Bumble what Oliver did here!"

Noah ran to the workhouse, found Mr. Bumble and said,

"Quickly, sir! Come quickly! Oliver has...."

"He has run away, has he?" asked Mr. Bumble.

"No, sir, he was going to kill me!" Noah replied.

Mr. Bumble hurried with Noah to Mr. Sowerberry's house.

Mr. Bumble saw no signs of improvement in the situation when he reached Mr. Sowerberry's house. Mr. Sowerberry, who had gone out for some work had not yet returned. Oliver, with a great vigour, which seemed never to end, was kicking at the cellar door. Mrs. Sowerberry and Charlotte complained of Oliver being highly ferocious,

upon which Mr. Bumble thought of talking to Oliver, before opening the door and bringing him out.

With this ides in his mind, he kicked back at the door and called Oliver, who responded,

"Will you, please let me out of the room?"

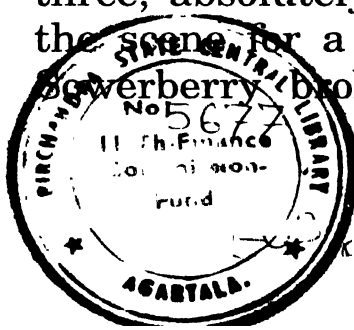
"Do you know who is talking to you, Oliver?" said Mr. Bumble.

"Yes," came Oliver's reply.

"And aren't you afraid of my being here? Aren't you trembling while I speak to you?"

"No," Oliver replied boldly.

Mr. Bumble, along with the others did not expect this sort of reply at all. Yet, on hearing this, Mr. Bumble stepped back from the door and started looking at the other three, absolutely astonished. Silence ruled the scene for a few moments, which Mrs. Bowerberry broke, saying, "Oh come on,



Mr. Bumble! The way he is speaking and the answer that he gives, simply shows him to have gone completely mad."

"It's not madness, ma'am," replied Mr. Bumble, thinking deeply about the whole situation, for some moments. "It's meat that has done the job."

"What?" Mrs. Sowerberry exclaimed. "It is meat, ma'am," Mr. Bumble said, asserting greatly. "you have overfed him ma'am and this has risen an evil soul and spirit in him. You may not believe this, when I say it, but, even the practical philosophers will agree to this and tell you the same. Had you given him a simple meal of vegetable· boiled in water, this would never have happened. All violence and rage in him is due to the meat that you gave."

"Oh, no!" Mrs. Sowerberry said suddenly, as if repenting.

"This shows how liberal you have been towards him!"

"Ah!" said Mr. Bumble, "the only way out now, that I know of, is to keep him locked up inside this room, for a day or so, without giving him any food, till he is a little starved down. After that, he can be taken out and fed on vegetables boiled in water, throughout the rest of the time that he stays here and learns how to work. Indeed, Oliver comes from a bad family, Mrs. Sowerberry! The nurse, as well as the doctor, said of his mother having led a life, that would have killed any respectable woman."

Certain remarks were heard by Oliver, which he felt insulted his mother furthermore. As a natural reaction, the feelings in his mind, now, contained greater violence and he again started kicking the door.

This was noticed by Mr. Sowerberry, who arrived at the place at that moment. He could not contain his anger and rage against Oliver, on listening to what his wife and Charlotte said about all the happenings. Violently, he opened the cellar-door and going near Oliver, he grabbed him by the collar and dragged him out.

Oliver received a beating and his clothes got torn; his face was bruised and scratched. However, his expression still showed that he was angry at Noah.

Badly shaken and boxed, Oliver was asked to explain his reason for being so violent and he replied,

"Noah insulted my mother. He called her bad names."

"So what, you wretch?" said Mrs. Sowerberry. "Your mother deserved what

Noah has said, and even worse than that."

"She did not," said Oliver.

"She did," said Mrs. Sowerberry.

"It's a lie!" Oliver said.

Mrs. Sowerberry now, started crying, with a flood of tears coming down from her eyes, all over her face.

Seeing all this Mr. Sowerberry thrashed up Oliver as much as he could. This was followed by Oliver being sent to bed, with only stale bread for a meal. That night, he ran away.

OLIVER MEETS FAGIN AND HIS BOYS

Oliver decided to go to London, which was far away and where no one, not even Mr. Bumble could find him. All he had with him was a shirt, two pairs of socks and a one penny coin. On his way, he slept on hay stacks, faced terrible cold and his feet ached as he walked more that seventy miles. Still, he was happy to have escaped from the miserable life he was in. Hunger made him beg for food and water at the cottages and

houses that he passed on his way to London.

On the seventh day of his journey, Oliver met a strange looking boy on the road. He was about as old as Oliver, being quite small, having dark eyes and was wearing dirty clothes. He wore baggy trousers, a long coat and a hat which seemed rather big for him. His name was Jack Dawkings, though he was better known as 'The Artful Dodger.' Seeing Oliver, he called out, "Hello young fellow, what are you doing around here?"

"I have been walking for seven days," Oliver replied, and I'm very hungry and tired."

"Don't worry, I'll get something for you, to eat. Come with me." Jack Dawkins said.

Questioning Oliver further, The Dodger came to know that he was going to London and did not have any money or a place to stay. The Artful Dodger now said,

"I'm also going there and I know of a gentleman who will give you free board and lodging."

After walking along for sometime, the Dodger led Oliver to a dirty, foul-smelling street and then into a crumbling old house. Entering inside, the Dodger called out, "Fagin, are you there? I've brought a new little friend for you!"

In that house, a hideous old man, with long and dirty hair, wearing a filthy and worn-out old coat, was cooking something in a pan. Oliver saw a sinister grin on his ugly face. On a table in that room four or five other boys, of around Oliver's age were sitting smoking long clay-pipes and drinking alcohol from cracked and broken beakers. Apart from this table, the only other thing in the foul-smelling room was a clothes rack.



"This is Oliver Twist, my new pal."

Lots of silk handkerchiefs were hung on it, along with dirty sacks, out of which, the boys probably made their beds.

"This is Oliver Twist, my new pal," Dodger announced.

Hearing this, Fagin grinned, came over to Oliver, smiling and took him by his hand, and introduced him to the other boys. All the boys came up with their pipes, shaking Oliver's both hands very hard, especially the one in which he held his little bundle. Not only this, but the boys seemed helpful and obliging Oliver upto the best of their ability. One of them was very anxious to hang his cap for him, while another put his hands in Oliver's pockets, so that, being very tired, Oliver might not have the trouble of emptying them himself. This could have carried on, but, Fagin stepped in and said,

"We are very glad to see you, Oliver. Dodger, take off the sausages, and draw a tub near the fire for Oliver."

As Fagin said this, Oliver resumed his looking around and he again saw the pocket handkerchiefs made of silk hanging on the rack. Fagin observed this and continued speaking.

"Ah, you are staring at the pocket handkerchiefs! eh, my dear? There are lots of them, aren't they? We've just washed them out; that's all, Oliver. Ha! ha! ha!"

The boys supported the saying of the old gentleman, after which everyone in the room sat down for supper.

Oliver finished his food and Fagin came up with a glass containing a hot drink for him and told him to drink it up in the shortest possible time, as the empty glass was required

for another boy. Oliver obeyed him, and finished his drink. He felt a little dizzy and found it difficult to keep his eyes open. Oliver could not keep himself awake and within moments, he sank into a deep sleep.

Early next morning, Oliver awoke refreshed after the sound and deep sleep. The only one present in the room, was Fagin, boiling some coffee in a sauce pan, for breakfast. At times, he stopped stirring and tried to listen to some noise, which came from outside.

Oliver was not fully awake. He was still feeling drowsy, with half his eyes still closed. On preparing the coffee, Fagin turned around, looked at Oliver and called him by his name. But, Oliver was not prepared for any sort of reply and, it appeared, he was still asleep.

Satisfied at this, Fagin silently stepped up to the door and closed it. Oliver saw him

taking out a box from under a plank in the floor. Very carefully, Fagin placed the box on the table. Dragging an old chair to the table, he opened the box and looked at the sparkling jewels and other precious things inside it, with greedy eyes.

As he looked at the things, picking them up one by one, and recalling the names of his boys, who had brought them to him, his eyes fell on Oliver. The boy was looking at the treasures in astonishment, which Fagin had brought out. Fagin immediately closed the box and, laying his hand on a bread knife, lying on the table, he trembled in rage and asked Oliver in a very angry and furious voice,

"What's that? What do you see over here? Why are you awake? What have you seen? Come on-speak up boy! As fast as you can-for the sake of your life!"

"I wasn't able to sleep any longer, sir," Oliver replied, meekly. "I am very sorry if I have disturbed you, sir."

"But, you were not awake earlier?" Fagin asked with same anger in his voice.

"No-no, indeed," Oliver answered.

"Are you sure about this?"

"Upon my word I was not, sir-I was not-indeed."

Hearing this, Fagin calmed down to his normal attitude, playing with the knife, before keeping it back and speaking normally and affectionately, he said, "Tush, tush. Of course, my dear. I just only tried to frighten you. I have seen you to be a brave boy. Yes, my boy, quite a brave boy you are!"

Oliver felt as if he was being praised by Fagin, when the old man again asked,

"Did you see any of these pretty things, my dear?"

"Yes, sir" replied Oliver.

"Ah!" said Fagin, turning rather pale at the answer, "they-they're mine, Oliver; my little property. All I have to live upon in my old age. The folks over here call me a miser, my dear, only a miser, that's all."

Oliver thought this man to be a decided miser. Having so many riches and treasures with him, there was no other reason for his living in such a dirty place and in such a filthy condition. Finally, he presumed that Fagin had kept all this treasure for looking after the boys. He now asked Fagin, if he might get up from the bed.

"Certainly, my dear, certainly. In the corner by the door, there is a pitcher of water. Bring it here; and I'll give you a basin to wash in, my dear," Fagin replied.

Oliver got up from the bed, went to the door, picked up the pitcher and turned back to bring it to Fagin. By the time, Oliver looked back, the box had disappeared. Not bothering about it, Oliver began getting ready for the day. He had not finished washing up, when Dodger, along with an energetic young friend, returned. Oliver had seen him smoking the previous night. When he came in he introduced his friend to Oliver as Charley Bates. All four of them sat down to have breakfast, the coffee, that Fagin had prepared, with some hot rolls and ham, which Dodger had brought home in the crown of his hat.

Glancing slyly at Oliver, Fagin said, "Well, I hope you have been at work this morning, m;y dears?"

"Quite hard," replied Dodger.

"As nails," Charley Bates added.

"That's very good!" Fagin remarked,

"What have you got, Dodger?"

"A couple of pocket books," Dodger replied.

Dodger took out some pocket-books and placed them in the hands of Fagin, who took them and went through them with great care and said,

"Not so heavy as they might be, but, of course, these are neat and nicely made. Quite a good work, isn't it, Oliver?"

"Very, indeed sir," Oliver said.

Charley Bates laughed aloud at this, which surprised Oliver.

"And what have you got, my dear?" Fagin asked Charley Bates.

"Silk handkerchiefs," replied Bates and took out four of them from his pockets, and put them in front of Fagin.

Inspecting them with a keen eye, Fagin said,

"Well, they are good one's-very. But, Charley, you have not worked them well. See, the threads shall have to be picked out with a needle and, we will teach Oliver how to do it. Shall u

s, Oliver, eh? Ha! ha! ha!"

"If you please, sir," said Oliver.

"You'd like to be able to make pocket handkerchiefs as easy as Charley Bates, wouldn't you, my dear?" asked Fagin.

"Very much indeed, if you'll teach me, sir," replied Oliver.

The others laughed at this and said, "Don't worry, Oliver. We'll teach you soon!"

Oliver could not make out anything which he had said, to be funny, Besides, he began

to wonder all the more on seeing what happened following this.

Fagin wore a coat and hat, picked up a walking cane and pretended to be an English gentleman out for a walk. He put many expensive things in his pocket, like a watch, purse etc. While he was walking, he stopped to look in a shop-window. The boys came upto him in silence and practised stealing the precious and expensive things from Fagin's pockets, without his getting to know of it. Oliver was to steal a silk handkerchief from Fagin's back-pocket. He could do this only after trying it several times and when he succeeded, Fagin gave him a shilling as a reward. In a short time, he was sent to the busy street of London with Charley Bates and the Artful Dodger.



Fagin pretended to be a gentleman.

MR. BROWNLOW IS ROBBED

Charley Bates and The Artful Dodger, now, brought Oliver to a busy street. An old man was standing by a book stall and looking at the books. Seeing him Dodger said to Oliver,

"Watch us go about our business!"

Both, he and Charley Bates sneaked up behind the old gentleman, stole the handkerchief from his pocket and ran off,



They stole the handkerchief and ran off.

out of sight. They did it pretty cleverly, without the man noticing. When Oliver saw all this, he understood the kind of work Fagin and his boys were doing. Realising what he had gotten into, he decided to go as far away as possible. He began to run and the old gentleman shouted,

"Stop that thief!"

He thought that Oliver had stolen his handkerchief and was now running away.

The people in the street and even some dogs began chasing Oliver. A young man with spotty hands and purple lips, caught Oliver and crashed him down on the pavement. Oliver lay there stunned. His clothes were now full of mud and there was blood on his face, which had come out from a cut on his lips. In due time, a policeman came up, dragged Oliver to his feet and

searched him roughly. But, the handkerchief was not found on him.

In spite of this, Oliver was arrested and taken to a Police Station.

Nothing was found with Oliver, when he was searched. Yet, because an offence had been committed, he was taken to a court, next to the police station. The old gentleman, whose pocket had been picked introduced himself as Mr. Brownlow.

"Officer!" asked the judge, Mr. Fang, "what's this fellow charged with?" "Your worship," replied the officer, "he had filed the complaint and appears against the boy, your worship."

"Appears against the boy, does he?" said the judge looking and studying Mr. Brownlow from top to bottom. "Swear him!"

At this, Mr. Brownlow said, "Before I am

sworn, I must beg to say one word and that is, that I really never, without actual experience, could have believed..."

"Hold your tongue!" the judge cut in.

"I will not, sir!" Mr. Brownlow responded.

"Hold your tongue this moment or I'll have you thrown out at once! Quite a senseless fellow you are, to speak to a judge like this!"

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Brownlow reddening in the face.

Not caring to listen to more from him, the judge turned over to the clerk and said, "Swear this person! Do this quickly or I'll not hear another word!"

Mr. Brownlow was highly upset at the way the judge spoke to him. But, seeing that any steps towards correcting this, could

bring harm to Oliver, he remained silent and submitted to be sworn in at once.

"Now," said the judge. "what's the charge against this boy, sir? What have you got to say sir?"

Mr. Brownlow started,

"I was standing at a book-stall...."

"Hold your tongue, sir!" the judge interrupted and said, "Policeman! Where's the policeman?"

The judge called the policeman and asked him to narrate the entire incident, the policeman told him the entire story and ended by confirming that nothing was found on Oliver.

"Are there any witnesses?"

"None, your worship," the policeman replied.

It was after this that, Mr. Brownlow somehow, managed to say everything he had on his mind, about the whole incident. He requested the judge to treat Oliver as leniently as possible.

"He has already been hurt", he said, "and I really think that he is very ill."

The judge turned towards Oliver and tried to talk to him, but, weakness overcame Oliver and he fainted and fell down on the floor.

The judge sentenced him to three months of hard labour and asked for his office to be cleared.

As this was being done, another man rushed in saying,

"Stop, stop! Don't take him away! For Heaven's sake, stop a moment!"

The judge cried out, "What is this? Who

is this? Turn this man out and, everyone, clear the place!"

"I will speak," the man shouted out, "I will not be turned out. I saw it all, I keep the book-stall. I demand to be sworn. I must be heard and this must not be refused!"

This man was no one else, but the owner of the book-stall. What he said, indicated that he knew everything. He was sworn-in and he told the judge that Oliver was not the one who had robbed Mr. Brownlow. He went on to say that he had seen two boys running away after Mr. Brownlow was robbed. Hearing this, the judge discharged Oliver.

Mr. Brownlow saw that Oliver was suffering from high fever. So he called for a carriage and took Oliver to his house. Everything there was neat and well placed and Oliver got a large, soft bed to lie upon.

Mrs. Bedwin, the housekeeper, looked after him as a nurse, and in a few days, Oliver was well again.

Hanging on one of the walls of the sitting-room, was a picture of a young, beautiful woman. Mr. Brownlow called Mrs. Bedwin and said,

"Look at this picture. Oliver looks very much like her! Isn't it? The mouth, eyes and features are just the same!"

This similarity led to Mr. Brownlow almost staring at Oliver. One evening, he took Oliver to his library and said,

"Oliver, I have become very fond of you and am concerned about your future."

"Does that mean that you won't send me away?" Oliver asked.

"No, of course, not," Mr. Brownlow said,

"but I want to know everything about you. Please, do tell me all that you know."

Oliver prepared himself to speak about himself, just then, one of Mr. Brownlow's friends came inside. He was called Mr. Grimwing and he walked with a limp and had a frown on his face. Seeing Oliver there, he asked Mr. Brownlow,

"Who is this boy? Where does he come from?"

Mr. Brownlow replied,

"I'll know about it tomorrow, but right now, I want Oliver to go to the book-stall on my behalf. They have sent me a lot of books, out of which, some are to be returned. Oliver will take them over and pay for the ones which I am keeping."

Saying this, he gave a five pound note to

Oliver and told him to come back with the change.

When Oliver left, Mr. Grimwing commented sarcastically,

"You take my word. He won't come back. He will sell the books and run away with the money which you have given him!"

"Don't say all these stupid things; it is nothing but nonsense! Oliver is a good boy," Mr. Brownlow said sharply.



He gave Oliver a five pound note.

OLIVER IS KIDNAPPED

Having robbed the old man, Dodgers and Charley Bates came straight to Fagin's house. On seeing only two of them Fagin shouted out in great anger,

"Where is that new boy? Where is Oliver?"

But before Dodger could answer, Bill Sikes, a member of Fagin's gang entered. He was a large and rough-looking man, his clothes were dirty and stained with beer.

Fagin told him about the robbery and missing Oliver. On hearing this Sikes cursed and said,

"You were a fool to let him go out. He still needed to be trained and now, he will tell the police everything about us and we'll be in trouble! We must search for him and bring him back, at all costs!"

This was obviously a very difficult job. No one from Fagin's gang could go to the police station. For this purpose, a young woman, named Nancy, was picked. She had done several jobs for the gang in the past. Dressed up very neatly and pretending to be a lady who had lost her brother, she went to the police station. Talking to a policeman, she said,

"I'm looking for my younger brother. Where is he?"

An officer heard this and replied,

"I'm sorry, but there are no small boys here."

"Oh, no!" Nancy said, "but, then where can I...find him?"

On being asked, she described Oliver. The officer, recollecting Oliver's face, said,

"Oh that boy! A gentleman took him to his house in Pentonville."

On hearing this, Nancy thanked the policeman and came back. She told Fagin about this. On hearing this he became furious and cried out, "We will not be safe until the boy is found. Even if he has to be kidnapped, he must be brought back here!"

Fagin, Bill Sikes and Nancy met at an inn and agreed upon a plan, to catch Oliver. Fagin then came out with some money for

Bill Sikes and they started on their way to where Mr. Brownlow lived.

All this happened before Mr. Brownlow had given a five pound note and some books to be returned, to Oliver, and Oliver came out of house to go to the book-stall. As he went forward, Bill Sikes and Nancy followed him. When he came near the book-stall, Nancy ran upto him and throwing her arms around him, she cried out,

"Oh, my dear little brother! Thank goodness I've found you! We were all so worried when you ran away! But, what made you leave your home?"

Some people crowded around them and Nancy, pretending to be helpless, said,

"My brother ran away from his home and joined a gang of thieves!"

A voice came out from the crowd,

"A wicked child!"

This was followed by another one, "Go home to your parents and try to be a good boy!"

"But I don't have any father or mother; I'm an orphan," Oliver said.

At this moment, Sikes pushed himself through the crowd and came in front of Nancy and Oliver.

"There you are, Oliver," he said. "Go home at once. Your dear mother is crying and waiting for you."

Oliver found himself to be in a position, where, help, only from the crowd, could do something good for him and he cried out pleadingly,

"Please help me! Don't let these people take me away. I don't known who they are!"



"There you are, Oliver," he said.

Bill Sikes hurried up to Oliver and snatching the books from him, he said,

"I suppose you stole them! Now, come along with me and I'll take you to your home!"

He dragged Oliver out and everybody in the crowd, believing him to be correct, left the place.

Bill Sikes took Oliver to Fagin and seeing him, Fagin said,

"My, what pretty new clothes you are wearing!"

Finding the five-pound note in his pocket, his greedy eyes gleamed,

"And a five-pound note is also there in your pocket!"

Seeing the money, Sikes cried out,

"That money belongs to me."



Finding the note, his greedy eyes gleamed.

"No, not at all!" Fagin said, "this money is all mine. You can take the books and sell them!"

Sikes threatened Fagin,

"If you don't give me the money, Nancy and I will walk away with the boy."

Fagin thought it better to give it up. So, he gave the five-pound note to Sikes and took the books. As he did this, Oliver pleaded, "Please, don't take them. The kind gentleman, who took me to his home when I was ill, will think that I have stolen everything. Please give the books and the money back to him."

"Oh, shut up Oliver; or else I'll set the dog on you!" Sikes roared out.

Nancy's intentions to protect Oliver rose up. Yelling out at Sikes, she said,

"No, don't do that! Keep that dog away from the child!"

Fagin interrupted and going to Oliver, he said, "So, Oliver, you tried to get us into trouble by going to the police, did you? You thought it to be easy to escape from us, but, soon, you will not be able to do anything like this."

He hit Oliver with a big stick, but, as he piked up the stick for the second blow, Nancy came and stood in between and said to Fagin, "Leave him alone! You've got him back now, haven't you? And you've turned him into a thief! Haven't you done enough?"

Somehow, Oliver was saved and he was sent to bed, guarded by Charley Bates.

BAD NEWS FOR MR. BROWNLOW

On one of the following days, the parish officer, incharge of the workhouse where Oliver had stayed earlier, Mr. Bumble, was on his way to London, to solve some legal problem. On reaching a town on the way, he felt tired and thought of resting for sometime in an inn enroute. He was glancing through a newspaper he got at the inn when, his eyes stopped on an advertisement :

A REWARD OF FIVE-GUINEAS WILL BE PAID TO THE PERSON WHO CAN PROVIDE ANY SORT OF INFORMATION REGARDING A YOUNG BOY NAMED OLIVER TWIST, WHO WENT MISSING FROM HIS HOME LAST WEEK.

Below this, a full description of Oliver's dress, person and appearance was given, along with tne name and address of Mr. Brownlow.

Mr. Bumble carefully read that advertisement three more times and after thinking for some time he got up, paid the inn keeper and proceeded to Mr Brownlow's house in Pentonville.

Reaching the place, Mr. Bumble knocked at the door.

Is Mr. Brownlow at home?" Mr Bumble inquired of the girl, who opened the door.

"I don't know. Where have you come from?"

Mr.Bumble explained to her, his reason for coming. When he uttered Oliver's name, Mrs. Bedwin, who had been listening to all this at the parlour door, swiftly came up in quite a breathless state and said,

"Come in. I knew we should hear of him. Poor dear! I knew we should! I was certain of this. All along, I have been blessing his heart and even now, I say, Bless his heart!"

Saying this, Mrs. Bedwin rushed back into the parlour, sat down on a sofa and burst into tears. In the meantime, the girl had run upstairs and returned back with a request that Mr. Bumble follow her immediately, which he did.

He was led into a little study room at the back by the girl. There Mr. Brownlow was



Mr.Bumble explained his reason for coming.

present with his friend, Mr. Grimwig, both were having tea. On seeing Mr. Bumble, Mr. Grimwig at once exclaimed, "A beadle! A parish beadle, that is what you are!"

"No more of this, Mr. Brownlow said to his friend,

"Please don't interrupt us this time." Looking at Mr. Bumble he said, "Take a seat, will you?"

After a few moments, Mr. Bumble sat down, quite confused at the way Mr. Grimwig had behaved. Mr Brownlow asked him,

"Sir, you came here in response to the advertisement?"

"Yes, sir," replied Mr. Bumble.

"And you are a beadle, are you not?" Mr. Grimwing asked.

"I am a parochial beadle, feeling very proud of this statement.

"Of course," said Mr. Grimwing and talking to his friend, he took him aside and whispered, "I knew he was. A beadle all over."

Mr. Brownlow heard this, shook his head as a sign to his friend to remain silent and again asked Mr. Bumble,

"Do you know where this boy is now?"

"No more than anybody," replied Mr. Bumble.

"Well, what do you know of him?" Mr Brownlow said,

Watching and observing Mr. Bumble with great care, Mr. Grimwing spoke up,

"You don't happen to know any good of him, do you?"

Mr. Bumble agreed to this, shaking his head. At this, Mr. Grimwing felt very sure of himself and looking triumphantly at

Mr. Brownlow, he said, "You see? I have been saying the same thing to you before; and he also agrees to this."

Mr. Brownlow anxiously looked at Mr. Bumble requested him to speak out everything that he knew regarding Oliver in as few words as possible.

Mr. Bumble presented some papers, which proved that he knew Oliver quite well. He spoke very low of him and the way he was reared up. Showing Oliver to be wicked and thankless. Mr. Bumble explained how Oliver had run away from the workhouse, after attacking a boy.

Mr. Brownlow grew sad on listening to all this and said, "Thank you, Mr. Bumble, for your information. I really wished I could have heard some good things about Oliver from you. Anyway, here is your reward money."



Mr. Bumble presented some papers.

Mrs. Bedwin added, "Whatever has been said, seems hard to believe! Oliver was such a kind and gentle boy."

Hearing this, Mr. Brownlow said, "Mrs. Bedwin, you may think whetever comes in your mind about him, but, for me, he has brought utter disappointment and from now, I don't want even his name to be mentioned in my house."

Mr. Grimwing remained silent. He could read Mr. Brownlow's expression and knew he was disturbed.

OLIVER AND THE HOUSEBREAKINGS

Oliver was now, in Fagin's hands and when he woke up in the morning, Fagin warned him not to run away again.

"Just keep this in your mind, Oliver," he said, "that had Dodger not found you on the road, you would have died of hunger a long time back. And if the police catch you again, I won't be able to save you, and you will go to jail!"

One day, in the evening, Fagin went over to Sikes and Nancy to find out when the Chertsey robbery was going to be carried out.

Sikes said, "We cannot do that job. None of the servants in that house have said anything about helping us."

But, Fagin had decided firmly that the Chertsey robbery would be carried out. So he said, "If you can think of any way to get inside without their help, go ahead and do it. I'll pay you extra for this."

"That's a deal", said Sikes. "but, I need a person who can climb up and go through a tiny window."

Fagin thought of this, grinned at Nancy and said,

"I know just the one! It's Oliver! And I

have taken all steps to ensure that he will not trouble us anymore!"

"That's fine," Sikes responded. "The night after tomorrow will be moonless and it would be absolutely dark. Nancy can go over and get Oliver for me."

Nancy went to get Oliver. When she saw him, she slumped down on a seat, desperately, and sobbed,

"May God forgive me!" she said, "I have come to get you for Bill Sikes. There is some job he wants you to do for him. And if I don't take you to him, or you don't do any thing which he says, he is going to kill me! Just do as he asks and don't say anything."

Oliver asked anxiously, "What kind of job is it?"

"It is something that cannot bring good for anyone," Nancy replied.

Nancy took Oliver by his hand and they both went walking down the street. Oliver thought of shouting out for help and running away;.

"Oliver, I know what you are thinking, dear, but please, don't try to run away this time. Fagin and Sikes, both are evil men and if you do not listen to them then, they will harm both of us. Besides I have already promised them that you would do exactly as they say."

Foreseeing trouble on running away, Oliver walked along quietly with Nancy and soon, they reached Sikes's house. On seeing Oliver, Sikes stared at him, showed him a loaded pistol and said, "Oliver, I'am warning you; don't make any noise or try to run away. If you do so, I'll use this on you!"

At five o'clock next morning, Sikes went



Nancy took Oliver down the street.

out of the house with Oliver, who, on turning back, saw Nancy staring silently at the fireplace. Sikes was on his way to meet Toby Crackit, another member of the gang of thieves. They walked throughout the day, and in the evening, Sikes and Oliver arrived at the door of a broken down house by the river side. On going inside, they saw Crackit lying on his filthy, old couch and sucking a foul smelling clay pipe.

Welcoming Bill Sikes, Toby Crackit said,

"How are things, Bill? And who's this young boy with you?"

"This is Fagin's new boy, Oliver Twist," Sikes replied.

Toby grinned as he observed Oliver, who noticed cheap rings on Toby's fingers. Sikes leaned towards Toby and whispered something in his ear. On hearing him Toby got up

and stuck his pistol in his belt. After this, they took Oliver with them and went out of the house into the dark misty night.

They kept on walking and in a short while, they stopped at a house. This was surrounded by a high stone wall. Toby somehow, managed to get on top of it, and from below, Sikes lifted Oliver upto him. Following them Sikes climbed the wall too, and it was now that Oliver came to understand that they had planned to break into the house and steal the precious things in it. He got frightened at this and cried out,

"Let me go! For pity's sake, let me go! I don't want to be a thief and steal from anywhere. Simply, let me go, now! I will not say a word to the police about you! Just leave me, now!"

Sikes got furious at this and pulling out his

gun, he pointed it towards Oliver. Toby knocked the pistol from his hand and dragged Oliver near the house. Nearing a shutter, the two men opened it forcefully and squeezed Oliver inside through the tiny window. Sikes gave him a lantern and instructed him what to do once he was inside the house.

"Now Rush up to the front door and open it for us. And don't try any tricks; understand? I have my pistol with me!"

Oliver crawled through the place and lowered himself into the room. The poor boy went up to the door and opened it for Toby and Sikes. On coming in, they went down the hall. Oliver was indeed frightened, but he decided to run upstairs, wake up and warn the people in the house. But, this was not to happen, because suddenly, Sikes yelled out,



The two men squeezed Oliver inside.

"Stop! Come back! Don't do it!"

Someone upstairs gave a cry of alarm. Oliver got so scared at this, that the lantern in his hand slipped out and crashed down on the floor. Another loud cry rose up and at the top of the stairs, a light appeared. There, Oliver saw two terrified men, with guns in their hands. As all this happened, a sudden, blinding flash and a loud bang followed and Oliver having lost his balance, reeled backwards and fell down on the floor. Sikes fired back at the two men and catching Oliver by his coat, he dragged him out of the house.

A DYING WOMAN TELLS HER SECRET

The night was very cold. It was snowing heavily and a sharp wind was blowing all across. Only those who lived in houses, found any comfort in this weather, the homeless were left to lie down and die in streets without my food in their stomachs.

During this time, Mrs. Corney, the new person in the workhouse where Oliver was born, sat down in her own room near the

fire-place. She thought of having a cup of tea and rose up to prepare it. From the table, where other things were also kept, she picked up the smallest kettle and began to boil some water in it.

As she finished her first cup, Mr. Bumble knocked at the door, which Mrs. Corney happily opened.

"Dear me!" exclaimed Mrs. Corney. "Is that Mr. Bumble whom I see?"

"At your service ma'am", said Mr. Bumble, who, while coming, had gathered a lot of snow on him and was now shaking it off his body and his shoes. After coming inside, he asked Mrs. Corney to shut the door.

"It is a very cold night", said Mrs. Corney.

"Cold, indeed, ma'am," replied Mr. Bumble. "We have given away, some twenty loaves and cheese with it, this very afternoon,

and yet, the poor are not satisfied and are asking for more."

"When will they be satisfied, Mr. Bumble?" Mrs. Corney said, as she sipped her tea.

"When, indeed ma'am!" remarked Mr. Bumble. "Why, here's one man, who, according to the need of his family, has bread and cheese to the full. But, is he thankful? Not even a bit. You give him coal which fills only a pocket-handkerchief and the next day, he comes up to you with his apron and asks you to fill that with coal."

Mrs. Corney agreed with this and continued to listen to what Mr. Bumble said further.

"All things now, are at places, where I cannot understand them," Mr. Bumble said. "recently, a man—you have been a married woman, ma'am, and I may mention this to you;

with hardly a rag upon his back, goes to our overseer's door when he had got company for dinner, and says he must be relieved, Mrs. Corney. As he had shocked the company and wouldn't go away, our overseer sent him some potatoes and oat meal. "Oh no!" says this person "Of what use is this to me?" You might as well give me a pair of iron spectacles!" The overseer took them away saying, "Very good, you won't get anything else here." Upon this, the person says, "Then I'll die in the streets," and the overseer says, "Oh no! You won't."

"Ha! ha!" said Mrs. Corney, "That was very good! Well, what then, Mr. Bumble?" Mr. Bumble replied,

"Well ma'am, he went away, and as he said, he did die in the streets. That was quite a, rather, stubborn beggar or poor person!"

"Certainly, this is something which I cannot

even believe," said Mrs. Corney.

Mr. Bumble took up his hat, as if he was leaving.

"It is real cold outside, Mr. Bumble," Mrs. Corney said.

"This is what I will do to prevent the cold from hitting me," Mr. Bumble responded, turning his coat-collar up. Preparing to go, he moved towards the door. Before he went out, he coughed slightly, before bidding her good-night and Mrs. Corney asked bashfully whether or not Mr. Bumble would like to have a cup of tea.

Mr. Bumble instantly turned back at this offer and sat down on the chair, which he drew up to the table and looked at Mrs. Corney, who had fixed her eyes on the tea-pot. Observing this, Mr. Bumble coughed again, and slightly smiled.

Mrs. Corney rose up to get another cup and saucer and putting them on the table, she began preparing tea for Mr. Bumble. While doing all this, her eyes had crossed those of Mr. Bumble and he again coughed, much louder this time.

"Sweet, sir?" Asked Mrs. Corney, picking up the sugar pot.

"Very sweet, indeed, ma'am," replied this guest, who said this in the most loving and affectionate way.

A cup of tea was made and handed over to Mr. Bumble, who, along with it, began to eat the things lying on the table. Mrs. Corney also joined him in this. They talked for some time and Mrs. Corney commented that, seeing it as a naughty comment, Mr. Bumble agreed with her and finished the tea in the cup. Mrs. Corney saw his empty cup,

so she made another cup of tea and handed it over to him.

"Hard hearted, Mrs. Corney?" said Mr. Bumble, accepting the tea and constantly looking at Mrs. Corney, "are you hard hearted, Mrs. Corney?"

"Oh, dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Corney, "quite curious a question this is coming from a single man! Why do you want to know this, Mr. Bumble?"

Mr. Bumble finished everything in front of him, wiped his lips and purposely kissed the lady's hand.

"Oh, Mr. Bumble!" came a whisper from the lady. "Mr. Bumble," she said, "I shall scream!"

But, Mr. Bumble did not respond to this and in a slow and dignified manner, put his arm round the lady's waist.

Suddenly, there was a knock on the door and Mrs. Corney went and opened it. At the door was an old man. He said to Mrs. Corney, "If you please, madam, Old Sally wants to tell you something and says it is very important; she is dying!"

Mrs. Corney was irritated at this. She was, in fact, enjoying Mr. Bumble's visit to her place. However, she excused herself and went to the room where Old Sally was lying. There was only candle light in that room, Mrs. Corney saw the old woman lying on a narrow bed. Her body shook with great pain. Two other persons, attending old Sally, stood by the fire-place, stirring the embers. One of them said,

"I don't think she'll live for long; two hours at the most; I suppose."

"Oh, shut up, will you?" shouted



She went to the room where Sally was lying.

Mrs. Corney, who was quite irritated. "I have better things to do than to simply watch this old hag dying!"

Saying this, she started walking out of the room. When old Sally saw this, she called out in a weak voice, "Please, don't go. I must confess something to you before I die. Please come near me, so that I can whisper in your ear."

Weak as she was, Old Sally made herself sit upright on the bed, and Mrs. Corney ordered the two attendants to go out of the room, so that Old Sally could say whatever she wanted in her confession.

Old Sally now, whispered,

"I remember having nursed a beautiful young woman in this very room. She was in a very critical state when she was brought here. Her feet were scratched and bleeding

and all her clothes were full of mud. She died soon after giving birth to a baby. The year was...."

"That's not important," interrupted Mrs. Corney. "Tell me all about the young woman."

Old Sally cried out with pain, and said,

"I did a wicked thing, it was something like a sin. When this young girl was dead, I searched around her and stole the only precious thing she had, under her pillow."

"What was that?" Mrs. Corney grew impatient. "Tell me."

"It was gold!" replied Old Sally, "pure gold. The beautiful poor woman kept it with her and guarded it too. She could have sold it to get some money for her clothes and food, but she did not do that; and she loved it very much."

Mrs. Corney grew anxious and more impatient on hearing of gold from Old Sally. She said,

"It was gold? What was it that she saved? Tell me quickly!"

Old Sally said,

"That woman trusted me highly and she gave it to me for its safety. But, now, she is dead. And as for her child, he also, might not be living now. If this is so, I am the one to be blamed, for the boy could have been brought up in a much better way, if the information of this gold had been given out. But, I remained quiet, whereas, I should have told everything."

"Told what?" Mrs. Corney cut in. "Tell me everything about this, before it is too late. Come out with everything quickly now!"

Old Sally was breathing heavily. She fell

back on her pillow and Mrs. Corney burst out in anger at her, "Come on! Tell me everything! Speak up fast, old woman!"

The dying woman struggled to speak out. Her voice was so weak that it seemed to be fainting, and she told Mrs. Corney,

"I have not forgotten neither that woman nor her child, who looked so much like her. Just before she died, she told me that if that baby lived, he might come to know the truth about his mother. Oh! That child was so alone! I only pray to God that he is well under the care of someone who loves him."

Mrs. Corney was very excited and she asked,

"What was the boy's name?"

"Oliver," Old Sally replied. "He was given the name 'Oliver'. May God have mercy on

me, for I hid that gold after stealing it from his mother."

The time for Old Sally's death arrived. Gradually, getting weaker and weaker, she finally died.

A tiny piece of paper was what Old Sally still had in her hand and Mrs. Corney grabbed it from there before the two attendants came back to take care of the dead body.

Mrs. Corney prepared to walk out of the room and as she left, she started grumbling, "There was nothing important that she had to say. She's dead now and my coming over to her has been quite a waste of time."



Mrs. Corney walked out of the room

A MEETING BETWEEN FAGIN AND MONKS

Fagin was eager to know about the Chertsey robbery. The Artful Dodger and Charley Bates were equally keen to know about it. As they thought about it and waited, Toby Crackit staggered into the room and threw himself into the nearest chair. With torn, dirty clothes and untidy hair, he appeared very worried about something. Remaining silent for some time, he

regained some energy and inquired about Sikes.

Hearing this, Fagin yelled back at him,

"You are asking me about Sikes? He went with you!"

Toby got anxious on hearing this and said,

"But I thought he would have returned here by now."

"No, this is not so," said Fagin, "and the boy hasn't come either. Where are they? Come on, tell me quickly! What has happened to the two of them?"

"The robbery could not be carried out at all," Toby explained, "as two persons in the house confronted us. Some firing of shots also took place and the boy was hit. We ran out of the place as fast as we could."

"What about that boy, Oliver?" Fagin asked hurriedly.

"First Bill carried him. But he could not do it alone, so we carried him between us and it was then that I saw how heavy he was. He slowed us down too. Somehow, we had to save ourselves and we left him behind, lying, in a ditch."

Fagin gave a cry and rushed out to find Sikes. Reaching the Three Cripples Inn, he asked the landlord about Sikes, but, 'no' was the answer that he received.

"What about Monks then?" he asked further. "have you seen him? I want to tell something."

The landlord replied,

"He will be back here in about ten minutes."

"I cannot wait for him," Fagin said.

"Just tell him to come to my place tomorrow, without fail!"

From there, Fagin went straight to Sikes's house, to meet Nancy. He told her about the robbery, and Nancy said sadly, "Poor Oliver. I think he would be better off dead than living among us."

Fagin was furious on hearing this and said,

"Listen, Nancy, if Sikes comes back without the boy, just tell him that he will have to answer me!"

"Leave me alone, Fagin!" Nancy said. "I need not tell you how many good jobs Bill has done for you and if asked for, there will be more, which will be done. So simply take your mind off that robbery and forget about it. The most important part of this job is that

Bill and Toby get back safely and I hope that Oliver is lying dead in that ditch there."

Fagin came back home and as he arrived there, he saw Monks standing at the doorstep. Anger rose in Monks and he asked,

"Where have you been? I have been waiting here for you for the last two hours."

"Taking care of your business," Fagin replied, whispering in a nervous way, "but, let's go inside and talk; nobody should hear us."

Inside the house, Fagin told Monks about the failed robbery. Monks listened to all this carefully and said, "I am not surprised at this failure. The robbery was not planned properly. Oliver should not have been sent there in the first place. He would have been good only for picking pockets to start with. It would have suited my plans for him if he



Fagin told Monks about the failed robbery.

had been arrested and sent to prison for a long time."

Hearing this Fagin said,

"I have different plans for Oliver Twist. Training him was difficult; and I had to send him with Dodger and Bates to pick pockets. But, this did not work well for us. Oliver was arrested and taken to court. There, he was given under the care of that man whom my boys had robbed."

"Well, I'm not to be blamed for that," Monks said.

"Of course not," said Fagin. "In fact, the way things have happened, it was very fortunate for you. Otherwise, you might never have seen Oliver and realised that he was the very boy you were looking out for. Remember that it was I, who made Nancy bring him back for you. The way she talks



"I have different plans for Oliver Twist."

of him now, tells how fond she has become of him."

"She needs a good thrashing!" said Monks.

"Oh forget about her!" said Fagin abruptly. "If Oliver is alive, I can still make a thief out of him!"

At that moment, a woman's shadow fell on the window. Quite amazed at this and eager to catch that person, they both ran outside. But, no woman could be seen anywhere.

"Who was she?" Monks asked, feeling uneasy about it.

A PERSON OF MARRIAGE

While Mrs. Corney had gone to see Old Sally, Mr. Bumble, who was left alone in the room, decided to look around the room. He wondered about all the fine furniture and the beautiful things Mrs. Corney had. He looked at the teaspoons, examined the sugar-pots, looked at the milk-pot more closely and repeated his examination of these things frequently looking over his

shoulder to see if Mrs. Corney had returned. With quite a reasonable time having passed, since Mrs. Corney had left the place, Mr. Bumble was now expecting her to return to the room and join him any moment.

Carrying on with his inspection, Mr. Bumble saw a chest of drawers. Thinking of the plans he had in his mind, he thought of opening up these drawers and checking up the things inside them.

Mr. Bumble made sure he was alone in the room and that no one was coming inside; he then opened up the three drawers, which contained clothes of the latest fashion. Mr. Bumble then opened the right hand corner drawer, to look inside it. In this drawer Mr. Bumble saw a small padlocked box. Picking it up, to check-up what was inside it, he shook it and heard a chinking of coins.



He picked up a small padlocked box.

Keeping the box back in the drawer, Mr. Bumble returned with a steady walk, to the fire place and, adopting his old attitude, he said to himself determinedly,

"I'll certainly ask her about this!"

Having generally looked around, he felt pleased with himself.

In a short time, Mrs. Corney was back, quite irritated and was complaining heavily,

"The old hags over here create so much trouble for me that I am just sick of the whole thing!"

Mr. Bumble gave her some wine to calm her down and said,

"Calm yourself down, Mrs. Corney, I have to tell you something."

Mrs. Corney looked at him and holding her hand, Mr. Bumble spoke out,

"The person incharge of this workhouse is dying. After he dies, the parish will be looking for a new master for this place. I am pretty well experienced for the job and it would be a good for me! If you and I marry each other, we could live here happily! What do you say about this, Mrs. Corney?"

Mr. Bumble's words brought a smile on Mrs. Corney's face and she replied,

"Yes, Mr. Bumble, yes! It would be nice!"

THE RESCUE OF OLIVER

While escaping and coming back from Chertsey robbery Toby Crackitt and Bill Sikes ran out into the heavy mist and darkness, dragging Oliver Twist behind them. They were followed by the shouts of men and barking dogs for quite a distance.

Toby was ahead of Sikes, who was dragging the unconscious Oliver along, when a thought struck Sikes and he told Toby to

stop and wait for him. Toby felt very uneasy about waiting because he could clearly hear the voices of the chasers who were armed, however, he waited. When Sikes reached him he asked Toby for his help in dragging Oliver along. In a few moments, Sikes noticed that Toby was slowing down and he roared out at him,

"Come on, faster and quicker! This is no time to play any tricks!"

As he said this, the noise from behind became louder and seemed to be coming closer to them. Sikes looked behind and through the ever loudening noise, he observed some dogs on leashes leading the men chasing them. Toby watched Sikes slowing down and looking back and he cried out,

"It's all over now, Bill, this kid has become a dead weight and he has to be dropped here and we should save ourselves!"

Panicking in the situation Toby simply got up and ran away from the place as fast as he could. Unable to call out and stop him, because of the men following them, Sikes clenched his teeth, looked around and sensed that danger was nearing him. Taking all the necessary steps, Sikes dropped Oliver in a ditch which he passed and, within moments, he also disappeared from the place.

Throughout the night, Oliver lay in the ditch in the severe cold. As morning came, the air became warmer as the light from the sun spreaded all over, behind an overcast sky. Things, which could not be seen in the darkness of the night, could, now easily be seen and made out. Within a few moments it began to rain. Unaware of all this Oliver lay unconscious in the ditch.

About an hour later Oliver began to come

to his senses and felt some pain in his arm and it was now, that he woke up. He saw his left arm bandaged very roughly in a shawl, hanging uselessly at his side and it was full of blood, because of the bleeding probably from a deep wound under it. Weak as he was he could hardly sit up. Nevertheless, he tried and managed to bring himself to that position and looked around for some help. But, the effort had been too much for him and he began to cry.

He sat for a short while till the pain eased a little and then tried to get up. He knew that if he remained in the ditch for too long, he would surely die. Somehow, he succeeded in getting up and rising to his feet. He now tried to walk. He felt dizzy and he staggered wildly, like a drunk. Yet, he did not give up and carried on with his attempt.

He kept seeing illusions that Bill Sikes and Toby Crackitt were on his sides, arguing angrily upon something, which he could not make out.

Oliver stumbled on this way for some time, somehow managing to cross over things, which came in his way, until he reached a road. The rain, now, became all the more heavily. The exertion of walking and the heavy rain had roused him fully by now.

Oliver looked around and saw that, not at a great distance, there was a house, almost at a distance, where all the strength and energy inside him, could take him. He felt that this was the place from where he could, probably, get some sort of help. Even if no help could be obtained from that place, he thought it better to die near human beings

rather than in the lonely open fields, where he was standing. Collecting all the strength left in his body, he stepped forward and plunged into, what he considered it as, his final effort.

Quite some time had passed, since he had started approaching the house. The distance to be covered, had, definitely shortened since he had last looked up at the house. On one occasion, as he looked up at the house, he had a feeling that he had seen it before. He could not recognise the house clearly, but, the shape and size of the structure seemed familiar to him. He thought that may be he would remember once he saw the people inside it. Oliver carried on with his efforts to reach the house. As he came closer the sight of the garden wall brought back memories of the previous night and he recalled falling down on his knees, entering



He staggered to the front door.

the house, the gun shots and other things that happened. When he connected them he found the house to be that very same house, which they had attempted to rob the previous night.

Oliver, on recalling everything, was so scared that he forgot all about his pain and suffering and thought of running away from the place. Run away and escape! This could only be done if it was possible, in any way! The energy that he possessed, could hardly make him stand; how could he run away from the place! Besides, even if Oliver possessed enough energy for this purpose, where could he go to? Pondering upon these two things, Oliver gave up this idea and decided to go ahead and enter the house. He pushed upon the unlocked garden-gate, staggered across the garden, somehow managed to climb the steps to the front door

and knocked faintly at the door. With this he exhausted the last of the energy he could draw up and he fell down on the floor unconscious.

Two servants, Brittles and Giles came and opened the door.

On seeing him, Giles spoke out, rather loudly,

"There's a boy here ma'am; badly wounded. I can recognise him to be the one who was with the robbers last night. I recall that when I saw him, I had thrown myself upon him and it had proved to be too much for this small lad. I've got him now! He deserves to be hanged."

As Giles said this, the lady of the house, Mrs. Maylie came up. She firmly said,

"Quiet, Giles, don't raise your voice! Go and fetch the doctor immediately."

On the instructions of Mrs. Maylie, Brittles carried Oliver to Giles's room and laid him on a bed there.

Mrs. Maylie's niece Rose Maylie, aged seventeen years, also stayed with her in the same house. Apart from being young and beautiful, she was a girl of a kind nature. On the arrival of the doctor, she, along with Mrs. Maylie, went to see Oliver. They were shocked to see how young the boy was.

"It is nothing but a tragedy that this poor child has fallen into the hands of a gang of thieves," Mrs. Maylie said quietly. Rose replied.

"Circumstances might have forced him to lead this life of crime."

"It is quite possible that he has never known a father's or a mother's love. This lad is so young and we must consider all these

things before we send him to the police and the prison."

For several days, Oliver was confined to the bed and remained weak because of the loss of a lot of blood. Dr. Loseberne, Mrs. Maylie and Rose served and nursed Oliver with the greatest care. Gradually, Oliver started getting better and a day came, when he could narrate everything about himself and his past life. Both the ladies were disturbed on hearing Oliver's story and Rose requested her aunt to help Oliver in the best possible manner.

Agreeing with Rose, she suggested,

"Yes, we must do this and to decide what can be done, we must ask Dr. Loseberne for his suggestions. Perhaps he can think of something, which could help the boy."

The doctor was consulted for this purpose



Oliver told them his story.

and after giving it a deep thought, he spoke out,

"Before the police come, we must talk to the servants. It is quite possible that they may be wrong about Oliver being a robber."

Giles and Brittles were called in and the doctor asked them to swear that they had not seen Oliver among the robbers, on the night the house was robbed. They were not certain about this, as there was a lot of darkness, noise and confusion when the robbery took place. Thus, no charges could be brought up against Oliver, when the police came to inquire into the incident of the robbery.

In the meantime, Oliver recovered and was no longer confined to the bed and the Maylies decided that he would be staying with them. Their kind treatment again

brought a ray of hope to Oliver, since his stay with Mr. Brownlow. In spring, the Maylies moved to their cottage in the country and took Oliver them. He was fully recovered and his wounds had healed well. Oliver was desperate to meet Mr. Brownlow and explain to him the reason of his not being able to return with the change, from the bookstall. For this Dr. Loseberne helped Oliver and took him to Mr. Brownlow's house, but, when they arrived at that house, they found it empty. There was a sign on its door which read 'For Rent' and went around in the neighbourhood asking people if they knew where Mr. Brownlow had moved to. One of the neighbours told the doctor that about six weeks earlier, Mr. Brownlow had left the house and had gone to the West Indies. Along with him, Mrs. Bedwin, the house keeper and Mr. Grimwig had also gone.

Oliver became very sad when he heard of this. To learn to read and write and did small jobs for the Maylies, by going out of the house. In the evenings he heard music played on the piano by Rose.

This continued for several days till one day Rose became ill and she was confined to the bed with high fever. As days passed, she kept on getting weaker, with her face going whiter. This was a sign of her bad condition. One day Mrs. Maylie called Oliver and gave him a letter for Dr. Loseberne. She told him to go running to the inn in the town and leave the letter with the postman. The inn was about four miles away from the house. Oliver did as he was told and reached the inn. The postman was feeding his horse and Oliver waited for him to complete it. A few minutes later he handed the letter to the postman and began to walk back. As he left,

Oliver saw a fearful looking man leave the inn and rush towards him with raised fists. His lips were dark red, and he had sores on his hand.

"Oh, no!" he yelled out. "It's you, again! When will I be free of the likes of you?"

Oliver turned and ran away from him and a little distance away he turned back, he saw that the man had fallen down and was thrashing about in a fit.

However, Oliver managed to return home. By the time Dr. Loseberne arrived, Rose had fallen into a coma and was critically ill. Dr. Loseberne examined her and said sadly, "I'm afraid there's nothing that I can do for her. We can only pray to God that she gets well at the earliest."

Everybody seemed to have given up hope but continuous treatment and nursing for three days and nights brought some improvement in

Rose's condition, which was observed by Dr. Loseberne and he happily announced,

"Thank God! The worst has passed off. Soon, Rose will be well and out of bed."

Oliver's joy knew no bounds. Oliver went out to get some flowers for her. Knowing the ones which Rose loved, he gathered a bunch and returned. When he came back, he saw a good-looking young man jump down from a coach and rush inside the house.

This was Mrs. Maylie's son, Harry, who, on going inside rushed to his mother Mrs. Maylie and said, "Mother, you should have written to me earlier, about dear Rose. You know I love her and want to marry her."

Mrs. Maylie responded, "Well, Harry, I think you understand my reasons for not informing you. I love you very much. I do love Rose also, but, marrying a girl, whose

parents are unknown can create problems for both of you."

"Never!" said Harry immediately. "I would not hurt Rose in any way. I love her, Mother! I have not married her until now because she has yet to decide whether or not I am suitable for her!"

Mrs. Maylie told Harry that he should meet Rose after she had fully recovered from her fever.

In the evening, Oliver was sitting on a chair on the front porch, when he heard someone saying,

"Come, my boy, come with me."

He jumped up to see who that person was and he saw Fagin along with that man with dark red lips, whom he had met outside the inn. Oliver shouted out in fear and the two men quickly ran out of sight.



Oliver was sitting on a chair on the front porch.

On hearing Oliver's shout, Harry rushed out to where Oliver was. He had been told about Oliver's past and he could understand why he was feeling so afraid. Oliver told him what he had seen and Harry, after calling Giles, looked around everywhere, but nobody was found. Finally, both of them came back and Harry said,

"Perhaps, you were having a bad dream, Oliver. We have not found anyone over here."

"No, it was not a dream, "Oliver said firmly. "I saw Fagin and that man whom I had met outside the inn and they beckoned me."

Harry and Giles again searched all around, but, still nobody was found.

ROSE AND HARRY ARE PARTED

Rose had now recovered completely and was out of the bed. Harry Maylie was allowed to see her. On seeing him, tears came in Rose's eyes and she said,

"I really wish that you had not come." love, "I do understand this, but when I came to know how critically ill you had become, I was afraid that before I could tell you about how much I love you, I might lose you forever."

"Dear Harry," Rose said, "I don't want you to do anything else, except think and concentrate on your future. You would be much better off without me."

"Dear Rose, you don't have to be told how much I have loved you, ever since we were small children and now too, my only desire is to win your love."

"Harry, I want you to think of me only as your friend," said Rose.

"Why do you want me to take you merely as my friend? Tell me that you love me."

"I love you, indeed, Harry, but, we can never marry each other. The circumstances of my birth will bring shame upon you. You must leave me now!"

"I'll do as you say, dear Rose," Harry said, "but, you must promise me that you will



Rose did not reply, she just looked away.

allow me to ask for your hand in marriage once again, before the end of this year."

Rose did not reply to this, she just looked away. Harry came upto Rose, kissed her and went out of the room, in complete silence.

A CHANCE MEETING FOR MR. BUMBLE

Mr. Bumble had married Mrs. Corney and was, now, working in the workshop after being appointed the Master of the place. Under him, another person was brought in as the beadle and it was he who now wore the uniform that Mr. Bumble had once worn.

Mr. Bumble was not too happy after having Mrs. Corney, they quarrelled very often. One day looking back and thinking

about himself before he got married, Mr. Bumble said, "I sold myself just for six teaspoons, a pair of sugar tongs and a milk-pot; with a small quantity of second hand furniture and only twenty pounds in money. Cheap; dirt cheap dirt that is what this is!"

"Cheap!" came a crying and shouting voice, in Mr. Bumble ears. "Any price would have been very high for you! And, as it is I have paid a pretty high price for you and the Lord above knows that!"

Mr. Bumble turned around and saw his wife present there. She had heard Mr. Bumble's comments about his situation and had responded to it.

"Mrs. Bumble, ma'am," Mr. Bumble spoke, with sentimental sickness.

"Well?" cried the lady.

"For the sake of goodness, do look at me," Mr. Bumble said scowling and fixing his eyes upon her.

Mrs. Corney, who was now looked upon as Mr. Bumble's wife and was called Mrs. Bumble, was, in no way, affected by Mr. Bumble's scowl.

They stood in silence for a few moments, after which, Mr. Bumble, who was amazed at what his wife had said, threw himself down, into a chair and decided not to say another word till he was spoken to.

"Are you going to keep snoring there throughout the day?" Mrs. Bumble questioned.

"I will sit here as long as I think it to be proper, ma'am," Mr. Bumble replied, "and although I was not snoring, I shall snore, gape, sneeze, laugh, or cry, which ever way

I think to be proper because such is my privilege."

"You privilege?" contempted Mrs. Bumble.

"I must tell this to you, ma'am," Mr. Bumble added, carefully weighing the whole situation, "it is the privilege of a man to command."

"And, in all goodness, what is the privilege of a woman?" cried out Mrs. Bumble.

"To obey, ma'am," Mr. Bumble spoke up in a thunderous tone, "your earlier, unfortunate husband should have taught you this; if he had done so, it is quite possible that he might have been alive today. I really wish he was, poor man!" Listening to these words, Mrs. Bumble dropped down in a chair, crying out loud and screaming of Mr. Bumble being a hardhearted brute.

But, Mr. Bumble was not affected by the

lamenting of his wife. On the other hand, because of his own behaviour, he became more firm with new vigour in him. He looked at his crying wife with great satisfaction and said, "Crying is good for the lungs. Apart from this, it is an exercise, quite good for the eyes, it washes the face and also softens down the person's temeprament. So, do cry away as much as you can!"

Saying this, Mr. Bumble picked up his hat from a peg, put it on his head, thrust his hands into his pockets and, in a rather victorious way, went towards the door on his way out.

Coming out of the house after a quarrel with his wife, Mr. Bumble thought it best to go and have a drink and, with this intention, he entered an inn. There he saw a stranger who had sores on his hands and the way he

handled things, he appeared to be very nervous. As Mr. Bumble came near him, he stared at him and said, rather roughly,

"I saw you peeping in through the window. Were you looking for me?"

Mr. Bumble replied slowly,

"No, not unless your name is...."

He stopped at this, hoping that the stranger would speak out his name. The man again spoke up,

"You couldn't have been looking for me, or you would have known my name and I'm not telling you what it is! So don't ask about me! But, I do know you! Aren't you .. parish official?"

Mr. Bumble felt important on hearing this and boasted out,

"Yes, I'm the new master of the workhouse."

"What luck!" the stranger said, quite surprised. "I came here today only, to find you; and here you are, right in front of me! I have come to get some information from you. I agree to pay for it; here's the money."

He came up with some coins, which Mr. Bumble put in his pocket. The stranger said, "Now I want you to go back twelve years and think about a night in the workhouse. A young woman, after giving birth to a child, died over there and the workhouse decided to keep that baby boy with itself.

"There have been many such cases," replied Mr. Bumble.

The stranger continued,

"Let that be, but, this particular boy, apart from being small, was weak too. He was sent to a undertaker's house to learn a



He came up with some coins.

trade; and in a short time, he ran away from there to London."

"Oliver!" Mr. Bumble cried out. "His name is Oliver Twist!"

"I'm now searching the old woman who nursed his mother," said the stranger.

"Oh, she? She's dead!" said Mr. Bumble. "She died in the workhouse last winter."

The stranger began thinking over this. Mr. Bumble couldn't say for sure, whether, or not, the stranger was glad to hear this news. Besides that man was biting his lips, which were already swollen. Suddenly, without saying anything, the stranger got up and walked up to the door. It looked as if he was leaving. But, Mr. Bumble's greediness told him that he could get more money from him. Thinking of this, he also stood up and said,

"Hold on, there may be some more information for you."

Mr. Bumble recalled the death of Old Sally on the day he had asked Mrs. Corney to marry him. He also remembered about Old Sally calling his wife, to tell her something about Oliver's mother. But, he did not know what she had said.

The stranger, on being called by Mr. Bumble, came back to him and Mr. Bumble said, "I know of a woman, who may tell you more. She knows the old woman's secrets."

"Where is this woman?" the stranger asked with a note of excitement in his voice.

Mr. Bumble replied, I'll bring her to you, In fact, I'm the only one, who can do this."

"Then meet me at nine o'clock tomorrow night," said the stranger, "here is the address."

Mr. Bumble looked at the piece of the paper, given by the stranger. No name was written on it so he asked, "Who shall I ask for?"

"The name Monks!" said the stranger.



Mr. Bumble looked at the piece of the paper.

IMPORTANT EVIDENCE

The next night, Mr. and Mrs. Bumble went out of their house, to meet Monks. It was quite dark and stormy and, in a short while, after having left the main road, they were walking on a narrow path, which led towards the river. They came to an almost ruined house, which stood on swampy ground. Inside this place, they climbed an old staircase and went up to the second floor. As

they reached the top they opened the door of a room just when a heavy storm began. The room was dark and it was only when lightning struck outside and the room was lit up for a brief moment that they saw Monks standing inside.

Monks also saw them and called out aloud,

"Hello there! Come, come inside and follow me."

Passing through the main part of the house, Monks climbed up a ladder and led Mr. and Mrs. Bumble to a small room in the attic. That room had a table and three chairs around it, close to a shuttered window. When they reached that room, Monks looked very rudely at Mrs. Bumble and said,

"Let's carry on with our business. What was the secret of that old woman? What did she tell you?"

The greedy Mrs. Bumble replied,

"How much will you pay me for my giving this information to you?"

Monks said,

"That would depend upon what you tell me. I will pay you only after evaluating the information that you give me."

Not caring about anything else, Mrs. Bumble spoke out abruptly,

"In that case, before I say anything about what you want to know, I will have twenty-five pounds in gold pieces from you."

Though Mr. Bumble was himself scared of Monks, he was surprised on seeing how boldly his wife talked to Monks. His surprise grew even further when he saw Monks giving the money to his wife, without saying anything. When Mrs. Bumble received the money she had asked for, she began to talk,

"The time when Old Sally died, I was the only one with her. Lying on her deathbed, she told me about a young woman, whom she had nursed in the same room, some years before, when she gave birth to a baby boy. The woman died soon after the child was born. Later on, that child came to be called Oliver Twist.

Before she died, that young woman requested Old Sally to keep something safe, so that it could help the baby when he grew up. But, instead of this, Old Sally stole it."

"Stole what?" Monks asked, losing all his patience.

"It was jewellery made of pure gold."

Monks's eyes gleamed on hearing this. Impatiently, he asked,

"Where is it now? Did she sell all that? At what price? And to whom?"

"I don't know about this. That old female died before she could tell me all about it. But, when she died, she had a piece of paper in her hand," Mrs. Bumble replied.

"Well, what about that?" Monks asked hurriedly.

Mrs. Bumble said,

"Nothing was there in it. When I opened it out, I found it to be just a pawnbroker's ticket. I think, that old woman pawned whatever she had with her, to get more money."

Monks became more angry, and, in anger, he asked,

"But what about that ticket? What happened to it?"

"I got hold of that ticket. After a few days, I went over to the pawnbroker, paid him



"Well, what about that?" Monks asked.

back the loan, along with the interest and got back the jewellery."

This excited Monks and he said,

"Well, where is that jewellery now?"

"I have brought it here with me!" Mrs. Bumble replied and she took out a heart shaped box. On opening it, Monks saw a gold wedding ring and a tiny gold locket, having two locks of hair.

Showing it to Monks, Mrs. Bumble said,

"The name 'Agnes' is engraved on the locket. But, there is no surname after it, though there is some blank space on the locket for it. A date is also mentioned over there, which I think, is probably, about a year before the death of that young woman."

To Mr. Bumble, Monks seemed pleased on hearing all this. He was tense earlier lest Monks demand back the money he paid to

Mrs. Bumble but seeing the way things were progressing he felt at ease.

Monks now, took the box, with the jewellery in it and led the couple, down the stairs. The three of them went into a room which had a floor made of wood. Monks went up to a point and opened up a trap door. Below which, Mr. and Mrs. Bumble saw the river flowing. Monks took a handkerchief and knotted it carefully, after putting that box and heavy lump of rock inside it. Then he dropped it in the river and the three of them watched it sinking down to the bottom.

Monks closed the trap door and turning to Mr. and Mrs. Bumble, he spoke out, in a threatening tone,

"Now, be warned! This remains as a secret between us only. You will not say anything to anyone, about this if you want



The handkerchief was dropped in the river.

to live happily! What you had to do over here has been done and you can get out of here now! I have more things to do."

Mr. and Mrs. Bumble just shook their heads and went out of that house, as quickly as their feet could carry them, without saying anything.

NANCY VISITS ROSE MAYLIE

The night after the Bumbles met Monks, Fagin went over to see Bill Sikes. Reaching Bill's place, Fagin saw Sikes lying on an untidy bed. A week had passed, since Sikes had fallen ill and he was very angry. The dressing gown that he wore, was dirty and he himself looked filthy.

On seeing Fagin, Sikes got irritated and said,

"So, at last, you have finally spared some time to come Fagin"

Fagin responded,

"You were not forgotten, Sikes. In fact, I was not in London for quite some time. I had to go somewhere else for some important business."

"Give me some money then," Sikes said. "Had Nancy not been here with me, I would have died by now."

"Very well," said Fagin, "when I go back, I will send you some money through Dodger."

"No, don't send him here at all," Sikes retorted. "I don't trust that cheat. Nancy will go along with you and get me the money."

Fagin took Nancy along with him to his home. But, just as he was about to count the money, Monks came in and Fagin left whatever he was doing and began talking to

Monks; after exchanging a few words he took him upstairs to another room. Nancy waited for some time, but she became very eager to know what these two men were talking about. She cautiously went up to the room and found a place near the door, from where she could listen to both of them.

When the two men came down, Nancy was already ready to leave. After Monks left, Fagin resumed his work of counting the money and when Nancy put on her bonnet and shawl, he gave it to her. Nancy took it without looking at Fagin, as she had become afraid of him. In fact, she was scared after having overheard what Fagin and Monks had discussed with each other.

By the time Nancy got back to Sikes, she was upset mentally. Still, she tried to hide her feelings from Sikes and gave him the



She hid behind the door t· listen to them.

money. Sikes was unaware of the turmoil within Nancy. He took the coins and after he finished counting them, he looked at Nancy and said,

"Hey! What's the matter with you? Why are you looking so pale and shocked?"

Nancy did not want Sikes to know of anything. So, she replied lightly,

"No....nothing....; nothing at all."

Later that evening, when Nancy brought a drink for Sikes, she quietly put a sleeping potion in it, about which, Sikes knew nothing. As he fell fast asleep, she left the house and rushed to the West End of London. On her way to that place, she was lost in thought and kept muttering to herself.

"I hope I am not too late!"

She reached a good looking hotel outside which she paused for a few moments to catch her breath and then going to the doorman, she said,

"There is a Miss Maylie staying in your hotel, I want to meet her."

The doorman looked at Nancy and noticed the manner in which she was dressed, he thought of getting rid of her and tried to send her away but Nancy did not, she stepped back and requested once again,

"Please, you must let me see her!"

The doorman said,

"Well, I can go inside and inform her that somebody has come to meet her. But, what would I say when I'm asked as to who has come?"

"That lady doesn't know my name," said Nancy.



"Please, could anybody inform Miss Maylie?"

"Then why do you want to meet her?"

"I cannot tell you this," Nancy said, in a desperate way and looking around, she called out,

"Please, could anybody over here, inform Miss Maylie?"

A woman, working for the hotel, heard this and thought of helping Nancy. She came upto her and said,

"I'll go. What is the message for Miss Maylie?"

Nancy saw some ray of hope and said.

"Please tell Miss Maylie that I have to talk to her about something which is very important for her, but, I must speak to her alone about this matter."

The woman turned back to go to Miss Rose Maylie while Nancy waited for her over

there. As she waited, she looked around and thought about how different was her life, from that of Rose Maylie. Still, Nancy held her pride and when Rose came to meet her, she said, "I have come over to see you after great difficulty and, if I had left without speaking to you, you would have regretted it after some time."

Rose responded very gently,

"I'm really very sorry that you were treated badly. Would you please tell me why you wanted to meet me so urgently?"

The kindness that Nancy saw in Rose made her break down and as she sobbed, she said,

"What I tell you here, will definitely put me and some other people in great danger. In fact, it was I, who took Oliver away from Mr. Brownlow's house in Pentonville. I

handed Oliver back to Fagin, the man who asked me to do all this."

"Oh, no! Not you!" Rose said in anger.

"Yes, this is the truth. Today, I heard two men, who were talking to each other secretly and I had to run away from their place so that I could tell you what they discussed. If they ever find out that I came here, they will kill me. One of them is known as Monks. Do you know him?"

"No, I don't know," answered Rose quite bewildered.

"Well, he knows a lot about you. It was his talk, which I overheard and came to know about your being here."

Rose became highly anxious on listening to Nancy and asked her to carry on with what she was saying. Nancy added,

"After that failed robbery at your place, I became suspicious about Monks. I had heard him talking to Fagin about Oliver. Probably, Monks was looking out for Oliver, much before we found Oliver. Monks saw him that day, in the street, with two others in Fagin's gang and recognised him as the child he was searching for. He went to Fagin and the two made a deal. Monks agreed to pay Fagin a huge amount of money on getting Oliver back. On top of this, Monks offered Fagin more money, if he turned Oliver into a thief."

"But why would a person like Monks, want Oliver to be a thief?" Rose asked.

"I could not hear any more of what they talked, as my shadow fell on the window and monks saw it. In fear, I ran away from there and didn't meet him till yesterday."



Rose told Nancy the whole story.

"And what happened then?" Rose asked.

"I had gone to Fagin's house with him, when Monks came in. Talking about their secret, they both went upstairs. I followed them cautiously and listened to them from the door. There, I heard Monks telling Fagin that the only proof of Oliver's true identity was now lying at the bottom of a river. Monks laughed as he told Fagin that all of Oliver's money was now theirs.

The way things have happened, it appears that Monks wishes to get rid of Oliver, so that he can get everything that Oliver is supposed to inherit from his father's will. He also said that when Fagin felt that he had worked Oliver enough and made enough money through him then he could get Oliver imprisoned and hanged!"

Rose was startled at hearing all this, but,

did not say a word, which could interrupt Nancy.

"At that time, Monks also said that he could kill Oliver himself. But, this could get him caught so he decided to watch Oliver very closely and make sure that he didn't gain anything from his father's will. Apart from this, Monks said, 'I will ruin my younger brother, Oliver yet, with all the traps I plan to set for him'."

Saying this, Nancy burst out crying, with tears falling down from her eyes. On the other side, Rose was surprised all the more, as she exclaimed,

"Oliver! Monks's brother!"

All that Nancy said, was very important for Rose and she said,

"You have informed me of all this, but,

how is your going here going to help Oliver?"

"Not much but there must be someone whom you can trust. He may give some good advice to you," replied Nancy.

"At present, there is no one like this for me," said Rose, "But if I need to find you, I must know where you will be."

"Before I tell this, you must promise me not to tell this to any other person, and when you come to meet me, you must not tell anyone about where you are going. You must come alone, without anybody even following you," pleaded Nancy.

Rose agreed to this Nancy continued saying,

"In case they don't kill me, you will find me on the London Bridge every Sunday, between eleven o'clock and midnight."

Nancy had narrated everything to Rose and she prepared to leave. Rose felt slightly uneasy over her situation and she offered some money to Nancy, who said,

"May God bless you, dear lady, but not even a single penny will I take."

As Nancy walked out of the place, the darkness outside enveloped her and she disappeared in it, Rose was contemplating on the thoughts that filled her brain.

MR. BROWNLOW LEARNS THE TRUTH ABOUT OLIVER

Rose thought deeply about all the things that Nancy told her. She had great affection for Oliver and she wanted to help him stay away from trouble. At the same time, her pity for Nancy did not approve of revealing her secret, lest she was harmed.

Suddenly, Oliver came running into the room. The way he rushed up and his expressions showed that he was very excited; and he said,

"I just saw Mr. Brownlow! He got down from a carriage and went into a house, when I was out for a walk with Giles. I didn't speak to him, I was afraid because I didn't know what he might be thinking of me, but, I got hold of a piece of paper, where I could write down his address. Yes! Here it is! Now, I will go to him and tell him the truth about the books and the money that he gave me!"

"Surely! We'll go right now, and as fast as we can!" Rose said. She was also eager to meet Mr. Brownlow. Her impression of Mr. Brownlow assured her that he was a kind gentleman and that he would be a great help in this matter. As the preparations to leave were being made, Rose took the piece of paper from Oliver's hands and read Mr. Brownlow's address, which was on Craven Street. Immediately, they left in their carriage to meet Mr. Brownlow. On their arrival Rose

went inside to meet Mr. Brownlow, while Oliver stayed in the carriage. Mr. Brownlow was in his study, together with his friend, Mr. Grimwing.

On seeing Mr. Brownlow, Rose said, "Mr. Brownlow, my name is Rose Maylie. I have come to talk to you regarding a young friend of mine, called Oliver Twist. I am very fond of him and since you have been very kind to him too, when he was with you, I thought you might want to know about how and where he is."

Mr. Brownlow was surprised on hearing this. He could not find the right words to speak. For sometime he sat quietly and after that, he gently said, "My dear young lady, there is no end to the number of places where I have tried to find and locate that boy, but, all has been of no avail and if you



Rose went inside to meet Mr. Brownlow.

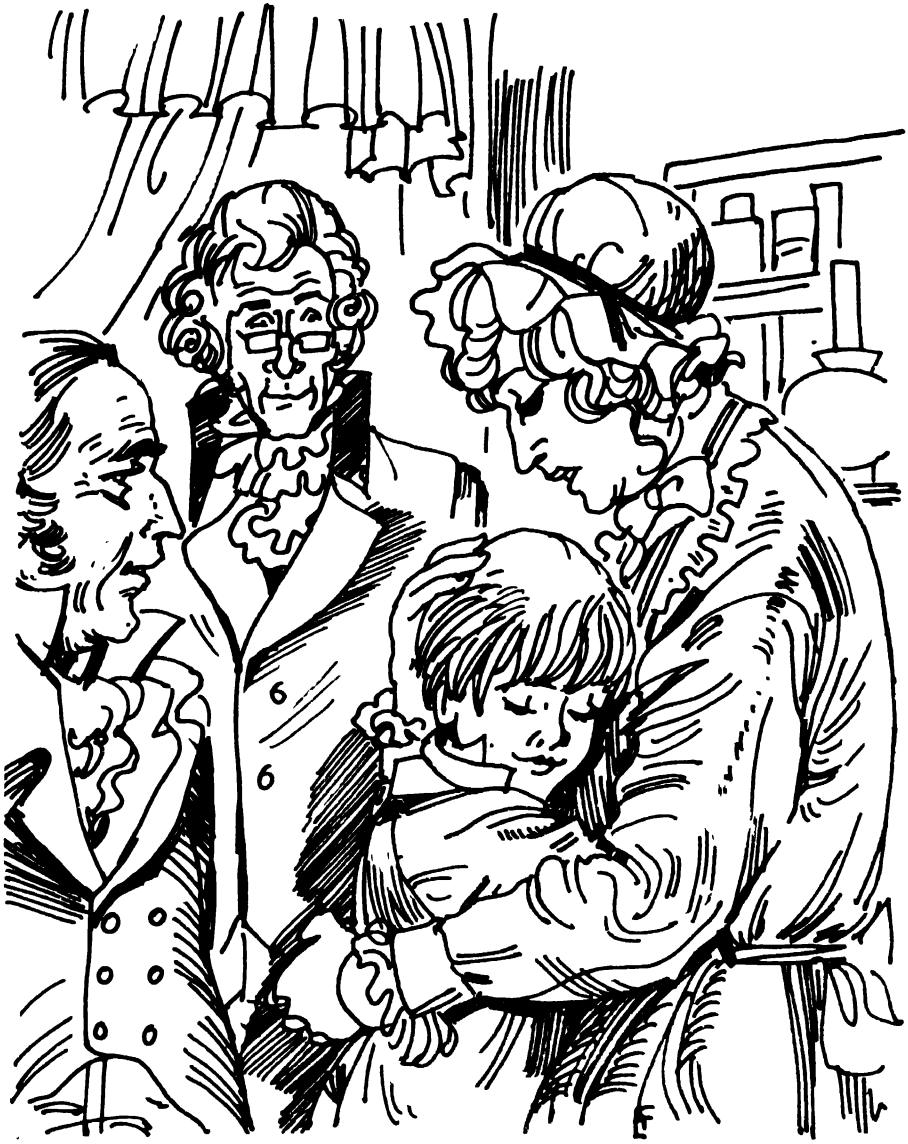
know about him, apart from your being able to change the bad image of that boy that was thrust upon me by circumstances, do tell me where I can find him."

Respect and trust, for Mr. Brownlow, grew in Rose's mind and she told him everything about Oliver, since he had last seen him. Mr. Brownlow was full of joy after hearing what Rose told him and he said,

"I am very happy to hear all this. But, where can I meet Oliver now?"

"He is just outside your house, waiting in the carriage," Rose replied.

Mr. Brownlow went out with all haste and was back within a few moments, bringing Oliver inside with him. Happiness could be seen on Mr. Brownlow's face, he then called the house-keeper, Mrs. Bedwin



Mrs. Bedwin embraced Oliver.

who came in immediately and embraced the boy. She then took him aside, sat down with him and began talking to him.

In the meantime, Rose told Mr. Brownlow about Nancy. Mr. Grimwig said that she should be arrested at the earliest, but, Mr. Brownlow did not approve of this. He said,

"Careful planning is the need of the hour. First of all, we must find out about Oliver's parents and give him all that is there as his right. Getting those rascals arrested can be done sometime later. We need to catch this fellow Monks, who is not a member of the gang of those thieves and make him confess in writing. For this, Nancy can be of great help to us. She can tell us the where-abouts of this man, so that we can catch him. This way we need not disclose who informed us

and Nancy will not be harmed in anyway. Besides, I will accompany Rose to London Bridge next Sunday night, to meet Nancy."

NEW RECRUITS FOR THE GAME

Noah Claypole and Charlotte were going to London. The night Nancy met Rose Maylie, they left the Sowerberrys' house. On their way, Charlotte felt tired and at last, she spoke out,

"How long do we keep on going like this? I am exhausted."

"Stop complaining!" Noah said sharply. "Don't forget, had I not helped you, it was

impossible for you to get away. You were the one, who stole from Sowerberry's till."

"But I did this only upon your saying. I need not repeat this to you."

"And you still have that money with you. Isn't it so?" Noah retorted.

In fact, this was a way in which, Noah had planned it for himself. If they were caught on the way, Charlotte was the one who would have been caught with the money.

Leaving the main road, they walked on narrow streets and reached The Three Cripples Inn. Seeing that, Noah said,

"I've heard of this being a good place. Let's go in."

Noah took the heaviest bundle from Charlotte and carrying it inside, both went straight into a small room and sat down at

a table. On being asked, they placed their order for cold meat and beer.

The bartender was talking to an old man seated there. This was no one else but Fagin.

"Look at our visitors, Fagin. They look just like country folk," said the bartender.

After watching them, Fagin said,

"Be silent! Let me hear what they are talking. I'm curious about these two. Just see how she obeys him. It seems she has been pretty well trained by the boy."

Noah was speaking to Charlotte and he said, "No more, coffin-making for me, I would like to live a gentleman. You will live with me like a lady."

"It is easier said than done. We will not be emptying tills everyday as we won't find enough of them said Charlotte!"

"Oh don't worry about that," Noah said, "there are lots of other places that I know of, for stealing. People's pockets are there to be picked, banks and houses can be robbed, mail coaches...."

Charlotte interrupted him and said,

"But, Noah, you will not be able to do all this on your own. For this, you will need help."

"Yes, I've thought over this," Noah said. "I need to get involved with a gang of thieves here."

Fagin heard this and was now, even more anxious to hear the rest of the talk. Going as near to them as he could, he sat down at the table next to Charlotte and Noah and held out his ear. Lifting his mug, he took a bit of his drink, looked at Noah, gave a cunning smile to him and quietly said,

"A person would need a lot of tills to steal from, if he has to make up for and enjoy his food and drinks everyday!"

On hearing this from Fagin, Noah turned pale. The thought of being overheard bothered him and he got scared. But Fagin laughed lightly and resumed what he was saying,

"You are lucky, I am the only one who overheard you! And you need not worry about this."

Noah got nervous hearing this. He thought Fagin was a person who was following him and checking about the money which had been stolen from the Sowerberrys. With this in his mind, he said,

"No I didn't take the money. It was she who did this! She stole the money."

Fagin tried to avoid this and said,



On hearing from Fagin, Noah turned pale.

"I myself have quite some experience in this. In fact, everyone here, at The Three Cripples, is involved with the underworld in some way or the other. And if you also want to join up with someone, you have come to the right place and are safe here. As per the situation over here, we have run short of helpers and, if you agree, I can recommend you to a gang of robbers. From what I see and understand, I can assume that you are coming from the country. This is why I developed a liking for you. Out of all the schemes that you have, which is the one you would like to work upon first?"

"What about the money that we have?" Noah asked. "In case we join, do we give it over?"

"Well, that's the only way you can go on," Fagin replied. "Besides, this money would be

useless to you. The police must be having the numbers of the bank notes that you have and, as a precaution, you should not use them to pay for your expenses."

"If that is so, what would we be getting to spend?"

"For that purpose, drinks and tobacco are free for you. Boarding and lodging will not cost you anything and you can keep half of what you and the girl earn. Besides, you would be living like a gentleman!"

Noah agreed to this and said,

"All that is fine, but, to start with, we would not like to do anything that is dangerous."

"For that matter, something like spying on some one won't be all that tough."

"Well, that's quite easy, but, the money in it is not enough for us."

Fagin and Noah began discussing the best way Noah was to start his job, when, a thought struck Fagin and he said,

"Oh, I know the best job for you! You can rob children! They go on errands for the elders in their houses. Grabbing money from them won't be difficult. After snatching the money from them, you can just push them aside and get away."

"I'll do that," Noah said willingly. "When do I meet the rest of the members of your gang?"

"Come at ten o'clock tomorrow night," Fagin replied, "and don't be late."



"Oh, I know the best job for you!"

THE ARTFUL DODGER IS ARRESTED

Next night, at ten o'clock, Noah and Charlotte came to the Three Cripples Inn and went to the small room at the back, where they had met Fagin the previous night. Fagin was already present there, but, was alone. Noah asked him about the other members of the gang, whom he was to meet. Upon this, Fagin gave him a naughty smile and said,

"Each man must be his own friend. We must stay together! Any careless talk could get us into prison! As it is, I am already in trouble. Yesterday Dodger was caught, stealing a silver-snuff box. Out of all the rest, he has been the best for me!"

Just as Fagin said this, Charley Bates entered the room and informed him sadly,

"Dodger is finished! The owner of the snuff box identified him. He will be taken to the courthouse for a trial and just think, one of the best pickpockets has been caught for such a small and stupid thing!"

A thought entered Fagin's mind. Quickly turning to Noah, he said,

"Noah, my boy, you could now help us in this. Someone out of us will have to be at the courthouse and give us the information about what happens to Dodger. For me, as

well as Charley Bates, it would be very dangerous to go. But, since you are unknown. here, you could safely go and do this job. If you go dressed up in fine and neat clothes, no one will even suspect you of being one of us.

Noah did not approve of this and he protested,

"I'm not so sure that I...."

"Not sure!" Bates cut in with great anger. "You cannot share the earnings of our business till you work for it."

Noah thought upon this for sometime, and finally decided to do what was told of him. He received some good clothes of a simple country-man from Fagin and a description of Dodger from Charley Bates, who guided him upto the courthouse. Noah entered the place and went and sat amongst

other people who had come to watch the proceedings in the court-house. In the dock, he saw several prisoners standing there, each of them stepped forward as the clerk called out his name. After sometime, Dodger's turn came and he was now brought before the judge.

"I am an Englishman! I know my rights!" he shouted.

The jailer turned to him and ordered him,

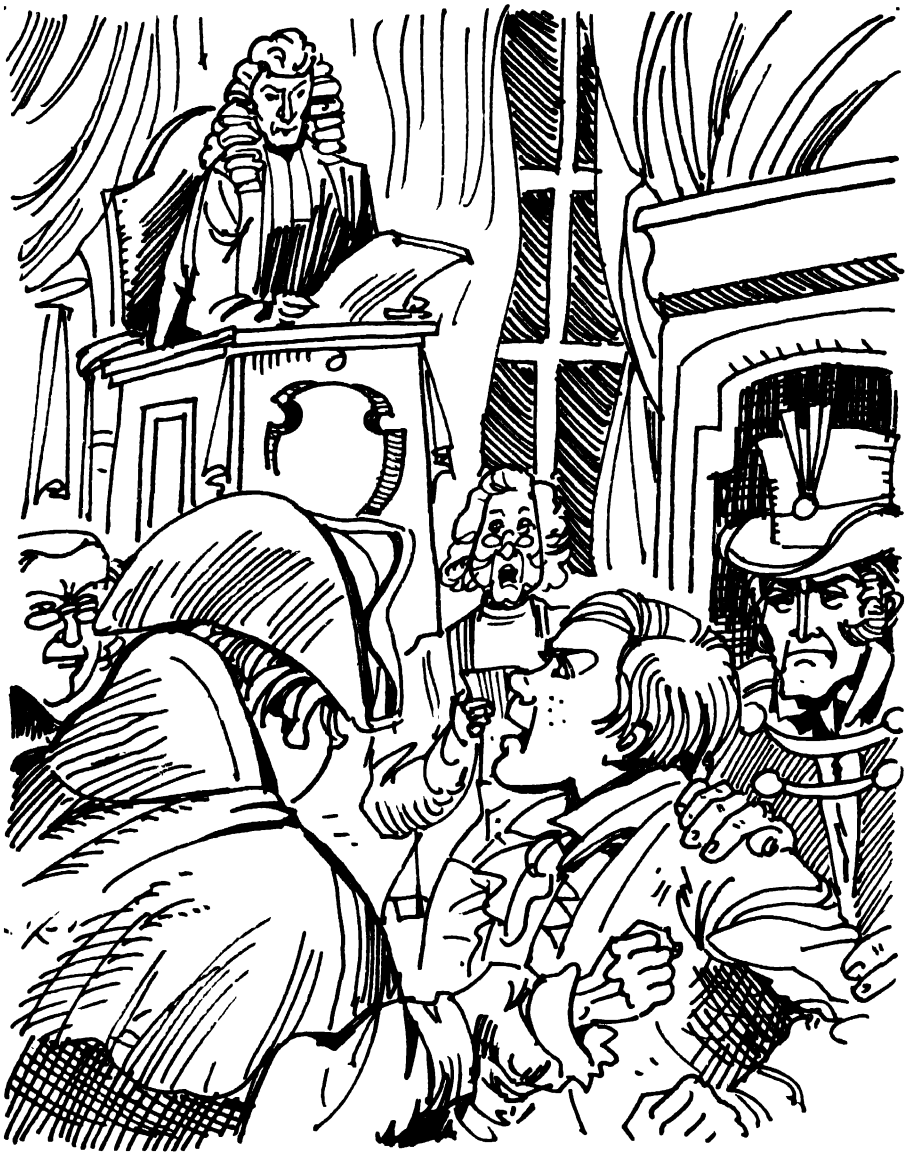
"Don't make any noise in the court! You'll get whatever you deserve!"

The judge asked about the charges against Dodger.

"He is charged of picking a pocket, Your Honour," was the reply.

"Are there any witnesses?" he asked.

An old gentleman, along with a policeman



"Take him away and lock him up!"

climbed up the witness box and told everything he knew or had seen.

The judge asked Dodger if there was anything that he had to say about this. At this Dodger literally shouted out,

"All this is nothing but a stupid misunderstanding!"

The judge knew that this was nothing but a lie, so he ordered,

"Take him away from here and lock him up!"

FAGIN SUSPECTS NANCY

On a Sunday night, Bill Sikes and Fagin were talking and discussing their plans for working. Nancy sat quietly in a corner, listening to them. A little before the clock struck eleven, she got up and started preparing to go out and meet Rose Maylie on London Bridge. She was on her way out, when Fagin noticed her, and asked Sikes,

"Why and were is she going out at such a late hour of the night?"

Before Sikes could answer, Nancy herself replied,

"I need to get some fresh air."

"But why at such a late hour as this?" Sikes asked.

Upon this, Fagin said,

"She's just being awkward. Woman can be difficult to manage many times," Fagin replied.

Since he was with Sikes, Fagin gave a petty excuse on behalf of Nancy. But, on his way back home, he thought deeply about the changes he had seen in Nancy's behaviour. She had now become very bad-tempered and moody and was not at all interested in the work of the gang. Besides, she seemed to have become fed up of living with Sikes. As

Fagin thought, it was quite possible that she had found a new boyfriend. But how could this be confirmed. For this, Fagin made a decision to send Noah Claypole after her, to spy on her.



Fagin sent Noah Claypole to spy on her.

A MIDNIGHT MEETING ON LONDON BRIDGE

As Fagin had told Noah Claypole, he began robbing children. On returning each evening with the money, he gave it to Fagin and told him how he had stolen it. Listening to what Noah said, Fagin was pleased at the way in which Noah had carried out his job and he said,

"You have done very well on your very first day! It is nearly seven shillings that you

brought! But putting this aside, there is something more important which I want you to do for me."

"I hope its nothing dangerous," Noah said quickly.

"No, there's no danger in this," Fagin assured. "It is a young woman that I want to know more about. I want you to follow her and tell me where she goes and who is the person she meets. In fact, I want to know everything possible about her."

"And what do I get for this?" Noah questioned.

Fagin replied, "As you see, the job is an easy one. However, don't be careless while doing it. I offer you one pound for it."

"And who is that woman?"

"She is one of our gang itself."

"What?" said Noah. "She can't be trusted then?"

"She probably has some new companions and friends now, and I want to know about who they are," Fagin responded. "At present, she's at the Three Cripples and if you say, we can go there right now and I can point her out and show her to you."

Noah agreed upon this and after seeing Nancy, he followed her when she left. He did this for more than a week, but there was nobody whom she met. On the following Sunday, at about eleven o'clock at night, Nancy came out of the house and she walked upto London Bridge. A carriage came there and stopped, and Nancy rushed up to it and met an elderly gentleman and a young woman who had come out of it. Nancy took them under the bridge, thinking that no one



Nancy took them under the bridge.

would be there, who could hear them talking. But Noah was already hidden there and he heard every word of what they spoke.

The gentleman said,

"Now, please listen carefully. Miss Maylie has told me everything and I know your secret too. I don't deny anything that you say and I fully believe you. I want to help and have made a plan which requires your help. You must try to get Monks and find out everything on his mind regarding this, but if this cannot be done, then you must help us catch Fagin."

Nancy was shocked at hearing this and asked,

"Supposing Monks informs us about the others, what will we do then?"

"No, it would be nothing but a waste of time on going after your friends, as right

now, we're are only concerned about Oliver's safety. For finding out Monks, your help is required for sure," Mr. Brownlow said.

Nancy thought about this quietly for sometime and sighed out, "Most of the time, he remains at The Three Cripples Inn. Apart from this, I don't know about where he goes; so you will find him there only."

"I must thank you for this valuable information of yours. Now we must find a place for you somewhere else, where you will be safe and can restart your life in a respectable way," Mr. Brownlow said.

Nancy refused this offer from Mr. Brownlow and said,

"Thank you for your kindness, sir, but I must hurry back to the place I came from. I do not want my absence to be noticed by anyone there. I cannot leave my old life behind either."

The urgency in Nancy's voice was noticed immediately by Mr. Brownlow and Rose Maylie, and Nancy left the place to go back. After reaching the carriage, Rose and Mr. Brownlow also went away from there. It was Noah Clayole, who now came out of his hiding place. Having heard everything that was said, a lot of information for Fagin was stored in his mind, and he rushed back, to tell Fagin everything that he had seen and heard.



They left the place to go back.

THE MURDER OF NANCY

On his return, Noah narrated everything to Fagin. Fagin listened with great care to the details, this midnight meeting of Nancy and Mr. Brownlow and Rose Maylie. When Noah finished what he was saying, he was sent off by Fagin to fetch Bill Sikes. On Bill's arrival, Fagin told him everything he had in his mind, regarding Nancy's activities. Sikes was astonished on listening to all this and



He pulled her out from her bed.

full of anger, he rushed back to his house. There, he saw Nancy in a deep sleep on her bed. But he could not control his feelings, and violently went up to Nancy and grabbed her by her throat. Pulling her out from her bed, he forced her on to the floor. As she choked, she spoke out,

"What is the matter, Bill? What have I done?"

Bill replied with great anger, "You know this well enough yourself. Secret meetings is what you have been going to! Someone followed you and heard everything that was said. What do you say to this now?"

"Listen, Bill," Nancy begged. "I've never spoken against you, or even Fagin, to anybody. Still, there is something which can be done. The persons I have met have offered to find a new and good place for me

somewhere far away. You also can come along with me and there, not only a respectability life, but safety awaits us too. Please, have mercy on me!"

But Sikes was so angry that he could not control himself. He also observed the great force with which Nancy held him. At last, he freed himself from her and managed to pick up his gun. Suddenly,he realized the noise of the gun going off would attract attention and he would get caught. He started thinking of some other way in which he could kill Nancy. No sooner than he thought of this, he raised the pistol in his hand and struck it on Nancy's head, as hard as he could. With blood flowing from her head she fell down on the floor. Sikes had killed her!

For the rest of the night, Sikes sat in a chair, staring at the body and trying to think

and trying to decide how best to get rid of the body. Leaving the body and running away from there was what he thought best and at the first light of next morning, he washed the blood off his hands and clothes, locked up the house and walked away into the country with his dog. Throughout the day, he kept on walking. At around nine o'clock that evening, he walked into a town thought of passing his night over there. There, he saw some people crowding around a mail coach. Listening to them, he came to know of their discussing the murder in London. Sikes found the town unsafe and he decided to go back to London. He thought that getting lost in a big city, to be much easier than a small town. Besides, he could even go to Fagin and make him come out with some money for him to escape to another foreign country. As he was thinking about all this, another thought came in his mind. Certainly,



He walked away into the country
with his dog.

if any body circulated any description about him, he would not forget to mention about the dog, this could get him caught soon. He decided to get rid of the dog and tried to drown him in a pond. But the dog realised this, and as soon as he could, he jumped out from there and ran away.

MONKS'S STORY

Having completed its journey, a carriage arrived and stopped at Mr. Brownlow's house. Monks was pulled out of the carriage and hauled into the house by two strong men. Mr. Brownlow stood aside as he watched all this. Once Monks was inside his house, Mr. Brownlow too went in and walked upto him. On seeing him Monks yelled out, "So you are the one who had me kidnapped from the street. How dare you do this?"

"The way you are being treated is certainly better than what you deserve, as I am your father's oldest friend, Edward Leeford. You should be ashamed of your actions. Had your father's sister lived, I would have married her and I still remember her and your father."

"But why have I been brought here? What is it that you want from me?" asked Monks.

"In the street, I whispered a name to you," Mr. Brownlow replied. "You have a brother."

"Need I tell you that I am the only child of my parents? I don't have any brother or sister." Monks said.

Monks was getting quite nervous about the whole discussion. As Mr. Brownlow continued his talk, Monks became more and more uncomfortable.



"But why have I been brought here?"

"Your father came to see me, just before he left for Rome," Mr. Brownlow said.

"I have no knowledge of this! And I'm not interested in knowing about it!" Monks said nervously. But Mr. Brownlow went on with what he was saying.

"Your father asked me to take care of some of his work while he was in Rome. Among these things, there was a young beautiful girl, whom he wished to marry. He told me of his plans to sell everything he had in his name and give you and your mother, all the wealth that he got. After this, he was to marry that woman and start a new life with her. Unluckily, he died before he could keep his promise to write to me and tell me more.

Soon after your father died, I searched for that young woman. She was expecting a child

and I also wanted to give her a good home to live in, with me. But this was not to be, as, on going to her father's house, I was told that the family had shifted to London, a few days earlier."

Monks felt slightly relieved on hearing all this, but not for long, as Mr. Brownlow continued,

"That young woman died alone, giving birth to a baby boy in a workhouse in London. The child was brought up by the people of the workhouse in quite a very improper way. By some strange but strong chance, I came across this child and for sometime, I was able to keep him from becoming a criminal even before I could find out about his parents."

Monks was astonished at this and Mr. Brownlow continued,

"I brought the boy to my house after he fainted in the street. He suffered from malnutrition and had high fever. I was more than surprised by his resemblance to that young woman. He could not stay with me for a long time. Your wicked friends kidnapped and took him away from me, before he could tell me anything about himself."

"How can you prove that the child belonged to my father and the girl?" asked Monks.

"If you so want then, I can prove that too!" Mr. Brownlow said sharply.

Monks was angry and afraid. He stepped up and down, in the room, thinking how he could run away from that place. Just then the door burst open and Dr. Loseberne

entered inside in a hurry. On seeing Mr. Brownlow he told him,

"They will catch the murderer tonight! His dog was found wandering around his old neighbourhood. When darkness falls, the man is sure to return. He cannot avoid getting captured as a lot of policeman are patrolling that area and there is a reward of one hundred pounds for his arrest!"

"Have you come to know anything about Fagin?" Mr. Brownlow asked quickly.

"He will be arrested shortly. As we speak here, Harry Maylie has given all the information to the police about this."

Turning towards Monks, Mr. Brownlow said, "Trying to escape from here now, is absolutely worthless, Edward Leeford. The



"The only safe place for you is my house."

only safe place for you is my house, so, stay here."

Saying this, he, along with Dr. Loseberne, walked out of the room and locked its door from outside.

THE DEATH OF SIKES

In an old and ruined house, over looking the ditch, Toby Crackit and Charley Bates were discussing how Fagin was caught, when they heard a noise coming from the stairs outside. Going out, they saw Bill Sikes's dog. Through a broken window the dog had managed to get into the house. It was weak and could hardly walk.

Toby got anxious on seeing the dog and said,



They waited in an old and ruined house.

"Does it mean that Sikes is coming here?"

"Oh, he must be far away from here by now." Charley Bates replied and brought some water for the dog.

They stopped talking and silently, they sat down as the night passed by. Their wait brought some results as after a few hours, the door opened up suddenly and Sikes staggered in. His eyes were sunken and he had dark circles around them. Fear had made his face white. Seeing them he said,

"Get me a rope. The water in the ditch outside is deep as possible. They cannot catch me and I will escape yet. Get me the rope as fast as possible!" he said, with a threatening tone in his voice.

Tying one end of the rope to a tree by the ditch, he made a loop of the other end and tried to pull it down over his head upto his



Sikes died as the rope, caught his neck.

waist. But, he slipped over the edge and fell off the roof. A sudden jerk came on the rope as the noose pulled tightly around his neck, and this was Sikes's end as he hanged on the rope, catching him from his neck.

OLIVER LEARNS THE TRUTH

Mr. Brownlow went to the town where Oliver was born, and rented a room in a hotel, there. Oliver, Mr. Grimwing, Dr. Loseberne, Rose Maylie and Mrs. Maylies were also there, together with the young man who had sworn at Oliver when he went to post the letter for Mrs. Maylie. Oliver did not know this man's name, but, he knew he was the same person whom he had seen with Fagin at the cottage.



"This young boy, Oliver is your half brother."

Turning over to Monks, Mr. Brownlow pointed towards Oliver and said,

"This young boy, Oliver is your half brother. He is the son of your father and of Agnes Fleming. Your father died before marrying the young woman he was in love with, and she, that poor girl, died after giving birth to Oliver and now, you are to tell us the tale."

Looking around, the best thing which Monks could do was to do what Mr. Brownlow had asked and as he prepared to speak, everyone turned to listen to him,

"You know that my father is also Oliver's father. He went to Rome and although they had separated years before, my mother followed him and I went with her. My father became ill and died. Among his papers, I found two letters. One was addressed to you,



Oliver could not help control his tears.

Mr. Brownlow, and the other was for Agnes, the young woman who was carrying his unborn child. The letter said that he loved her very much, and that he would marry her one day and give her child his name. He also wrote about the ring, the little gold locket with her name on it and of the blank space left for his name to be engraved on it, when they were married. He asked her to keep his gifts safe and to wear the locket close to her heart."

Oliver could not help control the tears coming out of his eyes. He was full of emotion.

"Carry on! What about the will? What did it say? Mr. Brownlow said quickly.

Monks remained silent on this and Mr. Brownlow said,

"Very well, as you don't want to tell us about

it, I certainly will! Your father wrote of his failed marriage to your mother and inspite of you being his only son, she turned you against him. You grew up to be as wicked and deceitful as your mother. Yet, he still provided for both of you in his will. Each of you were to be given eight hundred pounds every year. Agnes Fleming and the child she carried, were to inherit most of his property. The will also said that if the child was a boy he would not receive anything if he ever broke the law or brought dishonour upon his name. This is the reason why Monks worked with Fagin to turn the boy into a criminal. It would have suited Monks if Oliver had been caught and poisoned."

"But the will was destroyed!" Monks said, "my mother burned it and Agnes did not get the letter, but she did tell her father about the unborn child. Mr. Fleming felt disgraced, he took Agnes and her younger sister to

Wales and called himself by another name. Because of the shame she brought to the family name, Agnes ran away and her baby was born in the workhouse of this very town. Her father tried to find her wherever he could, but did not succeed and in a short time, he died of a broken heart, thinking that Agnes had killed herself."

Monks stopped saying anything more and Mr. Brownlow, taking over from him, said, "When Monks was eighteen years old, his mother came to me for help as Monks had stolen her money and jewellery. Apart from this, he was in trouble for forging cheques; and seeing no other way, he ran away and came to London. Soon, he was working with criminals and troublemakers over there. His mother tried to find him when she knew that she was dying."

Monks interrupted here and said,

"My mother told me she was sure that Agnes had given birth to a boy. As my mother lay on her death-bed, I promised her that I would find the child and persecute him. This is what I have done and, if I could, I would take him to the gallows myself!"

Everyone hearing this was shocked.

Then Mr. Brownlow explained Fagin's role in the sad tale.

"Monks had paid a large sum of money to Fagin to keep Oliver in his gang, but, if the boy was rescued, Fagin was to give back some part of the money. The two men quarelled over this and they went to the Maylies cottage to identify Oliver. It was then that Oliver saw them together.

Now, Monks tell us about the locket and the ring."



They went to the cottage to identify Oliver.

"When Agnes Fleming died, the nurse stole the gold and pawned it. The couple I told you about, got the pawn ticket from her and then they repaid the loan to recover the jewellery. I bought it from them and threw it into the river."

On being asked by Mr. Brownlow, Mr. Grimwing opened the door and Mr. and Mrs. Bumble entered the room. When they refused to admit their part in the whole story, the two attendants from the workhouse were brought in. They spoke of having seen and heard all that had taken place, the night Old Sally died. They had even followed Mrs. Bumble to the pawn broker's shop and had seen her get the jewellery.

"Shall I get the pawn broker here to confirm this?" asked Mr. Brownlow.

Mrs. Bumble pointed to Monks and said,

"That is not needed. I did have the locket and the ring, but I sold them to him."

"You and your husband cannot be trusted. I will make sure that you are never offered any position of responsibility. You may leave now." Mr. Brownlow said grimly.

Mr. and Mrs. Bumble left the room and Mr. Brownlow turned towards Rose, and said, "My dear girl, do not be afraid. There is still more that you should know."

Turning to Monks, he asked him if he knew Rose. Monks said, "Yes, I know this young lady."

"But I see you today for the first time!" Rose said in surprise. At this point, Mr. Brownlow spoke out,

"All has been said about Agnes, but, the fact is that Mr. Fleming had two daughters. Monks will tell you what happened to the other girl."

Monks said, "After her father died, there was no one to look after her. Some poor people agreed to bring her up as best as they could. My mother learned of her whereabouts and made her life miserable. However, she became known to a widow who lived alone in the country. This gentle woman felt sorry for the girl and took her to her home, where she could lead a happy and carefree life. I only saw the girl again just a few months ago."

"And where is she now?" Mr. Brownlow asked.

"She's here! In this room now?" Mr. Brownlow asked.

"She's here! In this very room!" said Monks, staring at Rose Maylie.

Mrs. Maylie caught hold of Rose as she almost fainted.

"My dearest Aunt Rose!" said Oliver, his mind completely filled with joy, to see his real aunt. Embracing Oliver, Rose's heart was full of happiness and tears rolled out of their eyes as the two met each other.

This was the time when Harry Maylie had also arrived at that place, and he said,

"My darling Rose, you once made a promise to me. All is known about you now and I have come to hear what you have to say."

Rose tried to tell Harry that she was more unworthy of his love than ever, but he was determined to marry the girl he loved, and he said,

"Dearest Rose, my love for you has no



Maylie caught hold of Rose as she almost fainted.

limits. I will have nothing more to do with my rich relatives and powerful friends. Please say that you will marry me in our little country church and we will live a simple life together."

OLIVER FINDS HAPPINESS

The judge and the jury were in the courtroom and Fagin stood before them in the dock. As the verdict was announced, Fagin was sentenced to be hanged in three days. All the people cheered in joy at hearing this, but, Oliver bowed down, praying silently, for the lonely, old man.

Harry Maylie married Rose in the country-church and they lived happily together after that.



Fagin stood before them in the dock.

Mr. Brownlow appropriately arranged for Oliver and Monks to inherit equal shares of their father's estate. Monks chose to spend his money on false ways and soon, he was without it. He turned back to thieving and cheating. After sometime, on being caught, he died in prison in a faraway place.

Noah Claypole benefited by helping the police find Fagin and was pardoned.

Charley Bates started a new and respectful life for himself, giving up his evil ways.

Mr. and Mrs. Bumble were asked to leave their jobs at the workhouse and they could not find any other place where they could work. Soon, they had sold off all they had so that they could survive and ended their days in the same workhouse, where they had ill-treated the orphans so often.

Oliver lived with Mr. Brownlow, who adopted him as his son. In all certainty, Agnes Fleming would have been proud and happy on seeing Oliver now, had she still been living.

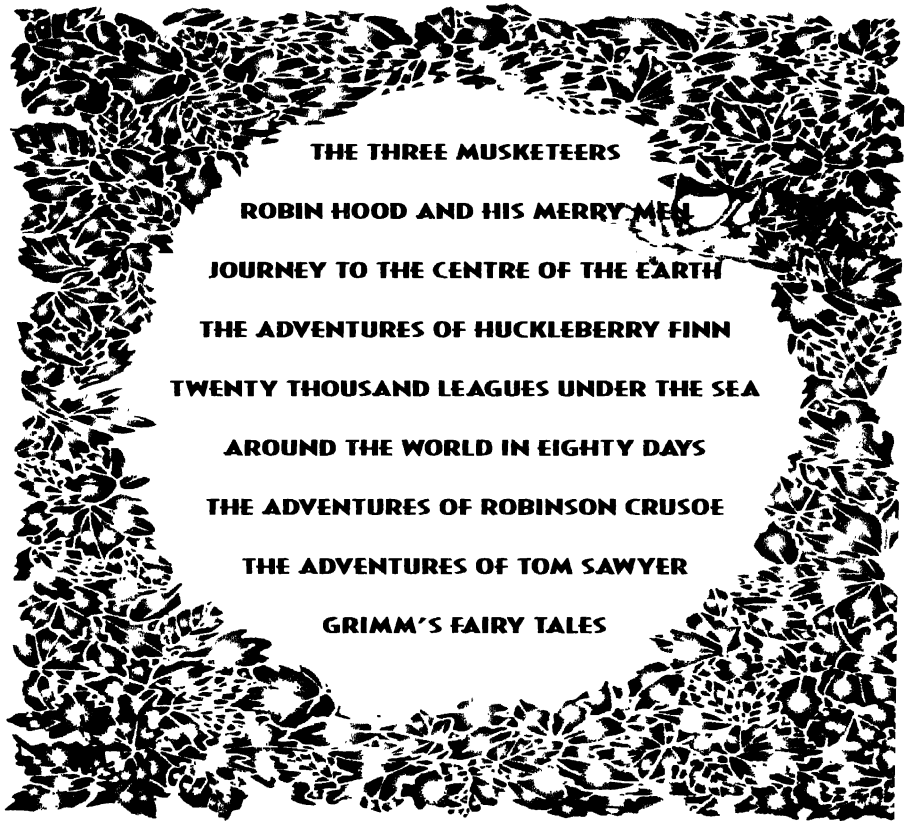


Oliver lived with Mr. Brownlow.




SONS

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